Inhuman Nature

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Inhuman Nature

by Consulting_TARDIS_Hunter

Summary

Will Graham seems like a normal patient in Hannibal's eyes at first, though he has an extraordinary mind and penchant for empathy. He was appointed to him to make sure he "Didn't fall in too deep." In Jack's words. Until there is a case with Dante's inferno, and that's when everything goes to hell. (Pun intended)

(By the way, the case of the Minnesota Shrike never happens in this, so Abigail doesn't go into their lives)

Prometheus

The hunger in the air was palpable, pressing to the roof of his mouth heavily with the flecks of iron clinging to his tongue and singeing his nose. This hunger was different from those he experienced before, oppressive, yet comforting.

Strong, yet vulnerable.

Familiar, yet foreign.

Chaotic, yet elegant.

The display of violence showed an almost personal touch that embraced his own mind in such a tantalizing way, he couldn't help but reach back to plunge himself into this unique darkness that called out like a siren song on a lonely night at sea. So, he took a deep breath and closed his eyes, taking the jump from the high cliff into unknown waters.

Watching the pendulum swing in front of his eyes as he waited with bated breath, he saw the blood disappear first. Then the wounds sealed like a zipper slowly going upwards. And lastly ropes in uncertain configurations crisscrossed the body as though he were to be put on display just like this.

"I lean over the man I just hunted and start moving the ropes as I see fit. He isn't awake quite yet from when I injected him after getting him alone. He will be soon." He gets the tools ready and smiles when he shows signs of waking up.

"I taunt my victim as I take up my first tool and starts to cut him open. This is the first kill I've done onsite, so I have to be more careful than usual." He cuts him open like a fish and take out his liver with the skill of a surgeon.

"After my work is done, I take out his eyes and replace them with stones." Scooping the eyes out, he places them in a glass. He checks if he's gone into shock yet and seeing as he has at the end of his work it doesn't really matter.

"After taking what I need from him, I untie him and set him up on the rock before tying him up again so he is exposed completely. Then I place a fake bird over his corpse... Now he truly is the Prometheus he made himself. This is my design." He comes out of the vision of the kill and stare at the body for a few good minutes before finally telling Jack what he wanted to hear, at least somewhat. It's the Chesapeake Ripper.

He walks out of the scene to Jack and gives a simple nod. "It's him. I'm done here."

"Where're you going?" Jack asks as Will walks off to his car.

"Home. You don't need me for anything else here." Will gets into the car before he can

respond, breathing a sigh of relief as he drives off towards Hannibal's office to see if he's there, when he wasn't and there was a really awkward stare down with both neighbors and inanimate objects, he started off to Hannibal's home.

Hannibal opened the door a couple minutes after he knocked, as if he was expecting him. None of the usual questions swirled between him when Hannibal saw Will's haggard appearance, letting him in with just a hello exchanged.

It wasn't just the need for sleep that hit him when he crossed that threshold into that living room, it was a bone deep tired... a deep seeded exhaustion left by many sleepless nights, early mornings, and the absolute bullshit of his world.
"I fucking hate my job."

He sighed out to the room he knew wasn't empty, even if it was besides the two of them, it always felt like there was someone watching but who knows, maybe there was. It was always filled with ghosts of the confessed fears and secrets of patients and the silent, bone chilling screams of... No, no. That isn't right. Just the screams of his head and himself. At least some part was always left here for him, something he couldn't quite recognize in the light of day, an unrealized idea of him. His heart sunk at the thought of what that could be, a good man or... a monster.

He realized he missed a whole part of a conversation when Hannibal presses his lips into a thin line as he ushers him into a room similar to his office, a study. Still with the library like quality, many shelves of books on every subject you can think of, high windows shining through with sunlight, bathing everything with an almost ethereal air. And of course there was soft, cozy furniture placed in this safe looking space, most notably is two armchairs across from one another which looks similar to the set up they have normally.

Will starts to roam around the space like an animal exploring a new cage while Hannibal sits in one of those two chairs, making it as if Will is circling him like prey. Though, he has a feeling he's the prey here.

"So, Will. What has happened since we last saw each other?" Hannibal has tilted his head slightly to look to the haggard man tracing his fingers over the bindings of his books.

"What hasn't happened? Our favourite serial killer has showed his face again. Apparently he has a thing for Greek mythology, a body displayed like Prometheus. Except his eyes were replaced with stones." Will pulls his hand away from the shelf and goes back to walking the perimeter of the room.

"Prometheus... he can mean many things, a trickster, a thief, or a martyr. He is a titan up to interpretation. How do you see him from the Ripper's eyes?" Hannibal leans forward in his chair, looking to Will for his reaction.

Will stops and rolls his head back to look at Hannibal, touching his desk. "He sees him as a thief, a liar, and a man who disrespected a God. The Ripper has a complex, not that he sees himself as a God but he sees that he's above everyone else somehow."

Hannibal takes in Will's posture, which unconsciously mimics his own and lets himself show the smallest of smiles. "And how do you see Prometheus?"

"He was someone who saw the good in people, how they could grow with help, and he saw that Zeus didn't deserve his respect no matter what he thought." Will slouches back down into his normal stance before taking his seat across from him.

"You see yourself in him." His words came out as more of a statement than a question, though Will still felt compelled to answer, shifting uncomfortably in his seat.

"Yes. I do." Will whispers, looking down at his hands in his lap. It's not something to be ashamed of, but it still feels strange to admit.

"Do you believe you should be punished the same way?" Hannibal leans forward slightly, interested in his answer in the way a spider is interested in a fly.

"I... I don't know." He looks to Hannibal as if he should have the answer hiding somewhere on him.

"That may be a key part of solving this case, how you see yourself and what you think you need. This is all about perspective Will." Hannibal murmurs to him in the voice he uses to soothe his patients. Just as Will is going to respond, a time goes off. "It seems we're out of time for this. Would you like to stay for a drink?"

"No, no. I have to... my dogs." Will seems a little lost in his thoughts, standing up and walking towards the door.

"I understand, goodnight." Hannibal gets up and opens the door for him.

"Goodnight, Dr. Lecter." He walks out into the twilight, feeling that bone deep exhaustion now more than ever. It's going to be a long night.

Lust

Chapter Summary

> Will looks at a kill from a new serial killer on the scene and we see him start to lose time.

Running.

That's all he can do, run. He can hear heavy breathing and he sees the shine of a knife in his hand, as if he captured starlight itself. Will sees someone running in the distance, his prey, like a jackrabbit trying to hide from a wolf. He can't let them get away, not before he's pounced and taken what he needs. Not before he finally becomes the predator he needs to be.

Will climbs a tree and drops from the heavens onto him like an angel, his knife stabbing the man in the top of his skull to kill him instantly. Then, he looks up to see the oh so familiar ravenstag, its ebony feathers shaking with every breath it takes as it approaches. He can see a faint trace of blood on its muzzle, then it leans down to him to...

Will shifts and jerks awake, covered in sweat and panting. 3:12 am, the clock reads. He huffs out a sigh and sits up to take off his drenched shirt, it feels as though he was just dunked into the ocean. Will gets up and goes to the bathroom to take a shower, followed by a concerned Winston.

"I'm fine, just a nightmare." He says to the dog sniffing at his hand. Winston backs off and Will closes the door. Then he looks to the mirror, hands braced against the counter. First mistake of the day.

Will sees his features shift and morph, antlers growing from his unkempt curls, black as midnight and blood drips from the sharp ends of them. He feels warmth going down his cheeks, seeing blood come from his eyes and he jumps back from the mirror. Will holds in a scream and closes his eyes to his distorted reality, before slowly opening them again.

Nothing. Nothing happened, he wipes his face and only feels tears rolling down, landing with a soft plop on the floor. He shakes his head and strips down, going back to what he was originally doing to try to forget what just occurred.

Turning on the water to a heat that'll steam the room, he steps in and feels his blood rise to the top of his skin to create a ruddy color to it. Then he looks to the water itself, watching it turn red before his eyes. Terror clutches at his chest, making him stumble back and grip at the wall until it was over. "I need to talk to Lecter about this."

Will finishes his morning routine with no further incidents, gathering his papers for his classes that day and praying to God that Jack doesn't come to get him that day. Unfortunately for him, God is dead and would never answer prayers anyway so that's exactly what happened.

"Jack, I need to provide these people with a good education. I can't keep missing classes like this." Will is speed walking out of his lecture hall, Jack following close behind.

"I wouldn't ask this of you if I didn't have to. I know you don't like looking at it." Jack replies, now at his side and trying to make eye contact which only rules Will more.

"You don't have to ask me Jack, you have other people, like Alana." Will says curtly, he's nearly to his car so he can hide there until he leaves.

"Three bodies have dropped, all displayed like they're out of some bible story. We don't know what to make of it, we need you." Jack is trying to appeal to his good side.

Will sighs heavily and turns to Jack, stopping in his tracks. "Anything else you know?"

"It'd be better if you saw it." Jack already starts to lead him to his own car, expecting him to follow. Which he did.

Will was starting to go numb already, barely holding onto the teather that loosely latched his mind and soul to this imperfect vessel. The darkness was reaching out once more to him, he longed to plunge himself into those unique, cruel waters once more. Will heard the sirens song, and he sunk below the surface.

He came to when he heard knocking on a window next to him, Jack was gesturing for him to come out before he started walking to the scene. Will was close behind, getting his bearings quickly. What he saw was something he didn't think he would ever see outside of his nightmares. It was creative honestly.

The man was lain spread eagle across the silk bedsheets, it would've been beautiful if it weren't for the fact that his genitals looked as though they were ripped from him by birds coming through the open window next to him. His face is contorted in an unholy look of agony and ecstacy.

"Which one is this one?" Will asked, staring at the body with an indecipherable look.

"The first of them, the other two dropped in Maryland." Jack responded, watching the bustle of the scene.

"How long ago?" Will takes off his glasses and starts to step towards the foot of the bed now.

"All within a day of each other, at least that's how we found them." Jack sticks his hands in his pockets, watching him.

"They've been dead a lot longer, we just finally found this man's sermon." He wipes his hand

down his face then adjusts his shirt.

"Sermon?" He asked, puzzled.

"I need the scene." Will said instead of responding, readying himself for the dive.

Unlike the one he saw before, this one repluses him. This darkness lingers with a mockery of light, the self righteousness he cannot stand within others, within himself. The oppressing feeling of the need to do something right in the sea of wrong that you feel you are, he doesn't like the justification it brings to their actions. Nor the sympathy they try for. Will didn't hear the siren's song that beckoned him before, no melody calling out to counter the darkness that it senses like blood in the water. It feels guilty, weak... pathetic.

Once the room is empty, he watches the pendulum swing in front of his eyes, the world fading around him to make it just him and the victim. First the color returned to his skin like paint coming over him. Next came the genitals, healing and coming back together as though molded by clay. And the man was once again living and breathing, looking at him with a blissed out grin.

"I smile at my sinful subject, bound to the bed and ready to receive his punishment for his disobedience." Will walks to the bed and sits beside the man, reaching out his hand to stroke his cock after putting on gloves.

"I let my subject have his pleasure, over and over. He shall see why this is a sin. I keep going until it burns and the blood vessels burst." His grip is tight and fast, the man crying out in pain from hours of this torture. The man is struggling against his bonds to get away until it's finally over.

"He finally dies from internal bleeding from the thing he enjoyed. I open the window beside the bed, letting in birds and other woodland creatures before I make my escape. This is my design."

Will pulls himself out of it, opening his eyes and looking around. The scene is just as it was before, giving him that familiar sinking feeling, the urge to wade into the stream.

He feels himself slip into his mind once more, the sound of a babbling brook filling his ears. The water slipped around his legs restlessly as he looked into the forest that held a monster he felt he could neve understand. Will sensed more than saw this monster, the sense of mild unease, the flip of his stomach when he caught a glimpse of it once which he remembers with startling accuracy. The gangly limbs, the midnight black skin, its unnatural height, the... the antlers that were like mangled tree branches. Then he heard a voice.

"Will, I don't mean to be impolite but why are you here?" Is that Hannibal, when did he get here? Will opens his eyes and looks around now, how did he get in Hannibal's study? What time is it? What did he do? How did he get here? Where's Jack? He is up and pacing now.

"Will, I suggest you calm down. What is the last thing you remember?" Hannibal stands up to intercept Will.

"I was at the crime scene, I just got out of a reconstruction. Then I was in the stream and you spoke... I was here." He's stuttering throughout the statement, running into Hannibal. Will's frantic blue eyes meet Hannibal's calm maroon, his hands clutching to his coat lapels. "Now I'm here."

"Where is here Will?" Hannibal replies, his hands going to the other man's shoulders, grounding, safe.

Will's eyes dart from his and all around the room, like a fearful rabbit. Like the prey he clearly was not. "Your study at your house."

"Yes, good. Good. Do you know what time it is?" Hannibal presses this thumbs gently, near his collarbone and watching the younger man's face.

He shakes his head dazedly, his gaze no longer holding its normal sharpness. His grip loses its frantic, white knuckle feel, making him go from manic to lost in one simple gesture. Will looks down at how close they are, as though lovers in a tender embrace. He doesn't let go.

"Repeat after me. It's 6:30 pm, you're in Baltimore, Maryland and your name is Will Graham." Hannibal murmurs in his ear, his hand sliding from his shoulder to his neck.

Will nods once more, letting out a soft sigh. "It's 6:30 pm, I am in Baltimore, Maryland, and my name... is Will Graham."

Hannibal moves his other hand to cup his cheek. "Good. Now, would you be willing to talk to me about what happened in this reconstruction?"

He takes a deep, shuddering breath and slowly, almost reluctantly pulls away before he does anything stupid. "This man he was... jerked off until he died. Probably took fourty hours at least. The killer took their time with this, even if it looks like a first kill. It's sloppy looking but well planned... a punishment for a sinner. They think themselves some kind of saint or punisher or... something."

"For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world." The other replies, his voice a soft murmur seeing as they're still close.

"John 2:16. He wants to purge sin from the world." Will rubs at his face, feeling energy seep from him easily.

"I did not know you memorized lines of the bible." Hannibal says, mildly impressed with him and wanting to close that distance between them.

"Didn't want to, but my dad was a bible thumper 'til we stopped going to church and he dedicated himself to the bottle full time." Will looks down, his voice quiet as he pushes his glasses up.

The other hummed non commitedly, eyeing the younger man with the interest of a vulture.

Will easily changes the subject, shifting uneasily under the others gaze. "I should be getting home." He's already making his way towards the door.

"You lost time Will, it would be dangerous for you to drive home on your own. I'll have you stay here with me." Hannibal cuts in easily, holding him to the spot with his words and his piercing gaze.

"No, no. I couldn't... my dogs." Will replies, cleaning his glasses and still seeming frazzled.

"Understandable, at least let me drive you home. With your condition at the moment I want to make sure you get home safely." Hannibal states calmly, taking in Will's state.

Will nods hesitantly, putting his glasses back on as Hannibal leads them out to his Bentley. He gets in in his half daze, letting himself drift in his thoughts as he looks out the window.

He comes to with a soft shake to his shoulder, seems he fell asleep on the way there. "We're here." Hannibal murmurs to him, soothing.

Will makes a groggy sound that sounds somewhat like, "Thank you." He gets out and steadies himself on his feet and starts to walk to the little boat in a sea that he calls home. Maybe he'll get some restful sleep this time.

Gluttony

Chapter Summary

> Will empathizes with the last victim and sees yet another kill from the seven deadly sins, he comes up with a plan to capture him.

Chapter Notes

> This chapter is a lot more dirty than the last one just to let you know. Now I hope you enjoy.
>
> Excuse me while I go bleach my eyeballs.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

He opens his eyes and starts to move his arm, only to hear a clanking of chains and to see a figure move in the darkness of the room.

"W-who's there?" Will stutters, struggling against his bonds and notices the cool breeze teasing over his bare skin.

"Ah, Will. You're awake. I thought that last one may really have done you in. It seems you love contradicting me, even now." He hears the familiar voice lilt from the shadows, coming closer from the dark.

"What the hell Dr. Lecter?! Let me out of here!" Will feels exhausted, boneless even as he tries to pull at his bonds weakly. He looks at Hannibal, something was... off about him. His teeth a little too sharp, his eyes a little too hollow, he seemed too tower over him like a lighthouse on a stormy night... and Will could've sworn he could see antlers branching off of him in the dark.

"I would think that we would be on a first name basis in the end, Will." Hannibal sits next to him on the bed and slides his hand up his leg. Will twitches away from the touch as much as he can, a mangled sound escaping past his lips.

"Stop..." Will whispers, his eyes dragging closed as the other teases his oversensitive cock and threatening to drag it to hardness after hours upon hours of this.

"Now now, it's alright. Just let go... wade into the stream." Hannibal is slowly stroking him, dragging strangled noises from his lips that causes a slow dribble of something warm onto

his stomach. He doesn't dare open his eyes as he continues until he grips him tighter.

Will's eyes shoot open and he sees Lecter for what he truly is, the razor sharp teeth, the blood covering his mouth... the flesh in his maw, the antlers that seem to encapsulate his vision for a moment before he looks down at himself. Covered in his own blood and ejaculate before it all goes black.

Will jolts awake and takes a deep breath, quickly looking himself over. Seeing himself fully clothed and not covered in his own blood and ejaculate soothes his nerves until he lays down fully once more and realizes he still has a problem... he's hard.

"Fuck..." Will whispers, getting up to take a shower to purge himself of the heat of his thoughts and body. He hears his dogs stir a little as he makes his way there, making sure he's quiet.

Will gets into the bathroom and avoids looking in the mirror, stripping himself quickly as he makes his way to the shower. He turns it to searing temperature to burn out his thoughts.

Will feels the blood raise onto his skin and feels the burn settle onto it, leaning on the wall for a moment. After a few deep breaths he quickly washes himself off from all the sweat that built up throughout the night. He leans his head against the shower wall to reach his hand down to wash his crotch.

"What the fuck..." Will feels his hardness and flushes with shame when he brushes his fingers against it. With a whimper, he tries to calm himself down, pressing a white knuckled grip to the shower wall to no avail.

He breathes out a begrudging sigh and let's himself reach down once more. Indulging just this once won't hurt me, right? It's just a body reaction.

Will strokes himself quickly, harshly as to not let himself savor and to not dwell on these thoughts any longer than need be. His ragged breaths fill the steamy stall, taking in the smoke of darkness he feels surround him as if he were to burn from the putrid yet elegant thoughts that fill his mind.

That is until his mind stray too far, to all too familiar hands, those of a surgeon, a... lover. The sharp and scarring teeth that would leave its brand upon his skin. Will feels his name escape his gritted teeth like a fearful prayer... or an unconfessed sin. Laying like bitter chocolate upon his tongue and falling from it like an angels feather to the impure ground. Then it kept coming, breathless utterances of his name. "Hannibal...!" With one last exclamation, it was all over and he was only left with the shame that follows unrequited ecstacy.

Will stands there for a long moment, letting the searing water and mental pain wash the evidence of his enjoyment away before starting his day. With a sigh, he turns off the shower of burning rain and got out to dry himself off. He didn't risk a glance in the mirror.

He got ready for the day with no other incidents and made his way to Quantico to go through the pictures of the crime scenes to refresh his memory. Will didn't even bother with the

pretense of going to his class since Jack was going to pull him out anyway.

"Hey, you're here early and without Jack too. Someone think you might actually like us." A familiar female jokes with a happy lilt to her voice.

"I think that'll be impossible Bev." Will makes an attempt at levity, though it would fall flat with anyone else. Beverly saw his effort and smiles.

"So, what're you here for?" She is looking through a recent file that was sent to her, back to business.

"To refresh my memory. I need the pictures from the crime scenes I didn't make it to."

"What're you talking about? You made it to all of them."

Will pauses and takes a deep breath, adjusting his glasses. "I don't remember it. I need to take another look." He sees a jagged combination of expressions cross her face, concern, worry, pity (there was a lot of that), fear for him, and... sadness before her face settled into a placid smile as she handed over the file.

"Sure, need me to leave for a minute?" Beverly closes her own file, searching for eye contact she knew she wouldn't get from him.

Will shakes his head slowly after a moment of consideration. "I may need you here."

"Nicest thing you've ever said to me." She replies with a subtle grin, sitting down in a small plastic chair while she watched Will arrange the pictures on an empty table.

Will felt his eyes glaze over, his hands operating on autopilot as he pushes them into a useable order. He gazes into the inky blackness of the table, barely interrupted by the pictures laying across its surface.

His mind pulls against its leash as it tries to scratch away from this repulsive melody... like nails on a chalkboard, or two notes grinding against each other in a duet, uncovered and raw. The self righteous rhetoric coats his tongue like sour milk, but sticky like peanut butter. It burned but he swallowed against it.

And he took the dive.

He gazes unseeingly at the pendulum swinging in front of his eyes and making the world fade to the inky blackness of the void. Then it's just him and the victim. First, it was the color of his skin to return like a glow from within him. Then his stomach shrunk as though the contents were being pulled out of him with a hook... the vomit covering the sheets and his face faded like a bad illusion. And once again he was alive and well, struggling like a fish on a deck.

"I watch my wayward sheep struggle against his bonds, weak as ever." Will leans against the doorframe of the dark room, seeing the plump form in the bed pull against the strong chains

that truly sealed his doom.

"Then I pick up the bucket of intestines I've collected just for this sheep. He shall learn why this is a sin. And repent." He sets the bucket on the nightstand and holds the man's jaw gently, shushing him soothingly. The yellow burn of fear shines behind his eyes, but he quiets.

"I open his mouth and start feeding him the cooked whale intestines." The man chokes at first but unwillingly chews and swallows to keep from suffocating. He gags at the taste, already feeling nauseous.

"He finally dies from a ruptured stomach, from his gluttony, he has seen the light. He has heard my sermon. I leave him to be found by another. This is my design."

Will yanked himself out of the water of this man's sins, his hearing coming back to the present in a rush of activity. Palms down on the table, feeling the sweat build on the surface as his eyes dart around the room. The first face he takes in is a familiar, welcome one. The maroon eyes that glance over his form, warm yet distant soothe his nerves and press the hairs standing on the back of his neck into a more pliant state.

"Dr. Lecter..." Will breathes out in a soft rush, his hands curling slightly as he pushes off the surface and standing ramrod straight.

"Will, are you with us now?" Hannibal asks, making his way to the man in question and taking in his frazzled state. "I apologize if I interrupted your thoughts, it was not my intention."

"No, no it's fine... fine. Just came out of it anyway. Why're you here?" He turns to face him, palms on the table, scarcely missing the pictures with this move.

"Uncle Jack thought it best if I stay with you today." The other folds his hands behind his back, raising his posture ever so slightly.

"So he wants me watched like a field mouse in a lab." Will snipes, rolling his eyes as he pushes off of the table to make both of them the same height. Almost.

Hannibal looks down at him with a dangerous glint to his eyes but there is a smile pulling at the edge of his lips. "If that observation makes you comfortable."

Will meets his eyes for a moment, a matching spark calling to the maroon eyes, their monsters pressing against their cages... yearning to reach through the bars and just... take and take and take... then the moment is over, Will yanking the thread that connected them as he breaks eye contact. As though he's mimicking the prey everyone thinks he is.

They both know better.

A higher pitched voice interrupts both their trains of thought, like a car on the tracks. "Okay guys, enough with the measuring. Let's get back to work." Jimmy says, looking at a body on another table.

He backs off to allow the other enough room to breathe, walking back to the other table and expecting Will to trail behind. He was right.

Will sees the body in full view now, propelled back into the suffocating, confining... pathetic righteousness of this man's darkness. He glazes over once more, going pale when he sees the body he just recreated.

He feels a wave of nausea wash over him, the sharp pain like a knife being plunged into his head. Then the abyss greeted him. Not the normal place he sees when he fades.

Quiet.

Cold.

Dark.

... Lonely.

Will looks around in the darkness, trying to find his own escape. Something. Anything. He tries to make a sound but when he opens his mouth, he feels himself choke on the darkness. It creeps under his skin, reaching out like tendrils through his vains. The emptiness spreading like a plague, the need to fill it, to fix what he has done by purging the source. Purge the source...

"Will? What do you mean?" There's that voice again, the lilt draws him to the surface and shines a light in the darkness.

He opens his eyes and searches for the source, landing on the other man's chest. Safer than looking in his eyes at the moment. Deep breath in... out. "There is a reason he is only killing men. He is having some kind of issue and by the looks of the kills... it's sexual."

"A conflict between faith and sexuality, a common struggle with what he sees as an uncommon solution." Hannibal continued for him, near shoulder to shoulder with him now, having moved from blocking Will's vision.

"So you're telling me that this guy is killing people because he's some kind of religious nut having a sexuality crisis." Brian stated, sighing.

"A crude way of saying it, yes." Hannibal replies, still ever the vision of politeness, of control.

"Wait, who these days would be this dedicated to their faith?" Beverly cuts in, looking to the group.

"You'd be surprised actually, most people stick with their faith for the majority of their lives. Though not as dedicated as this-" Jimmy was interrupted by Will in his natural deadpan voice.

"So we're looking for someone who either grew up in a religiously abusive family or was raised in religion, like an altar boy that went on to become a priest." Will is staring at the body bag unwaveringly, arms crossed over his chest.

"Aren't most priests old? Our victims are pretty young so I don't think they'd go with an older guy." Brian questioned, looking at Will with confusion.

"Some yes, but some people start into the priesthood early on in life. So they look much more like youth leaders. Many would take on a paramour of that age." Hannibal cuts in before Will can answer, his eyes trained on the group.

"Have you taken on "paramours" of that age Dr. Lecter?" Will asks before anyone else speaks, glancing up at him now. Our favourite science crew can't help but whisper among themselves because of it.

"I take on paramours closer to my age, but I am willing to make exceptions." He replies, his gaze flicking down Will's body. Will can't help the blush that coats his cheeks like paint, clearing his throat he goes back to the task at hand.

"So we're looking for a twenty to thirty year old faith-led man who's having a sexuality crisis. That's easy to find." He sighs out, pinching the bridge of his nose.

"Aka, too many of them to narrow the pool down." Beverly says, observing the body in front of them.

"Not necessarily, I," Jimmy holds up a plastic vial of a white substance. "Found semen that can link back to our guy."

"You won't be able to match it to anyone, our killer is clean besides this." Will states, folding his arms over his chest.

"It's worth a shot." Brian sighs as he plucks the vial from Jimmy, walking out of the room.

"Got any other ideas for tracking him then?" A deeper voice cuts in, Jack. Will turns to see him standing by the door, scanning the room.

"A couple." He replies, waiting for that gesture that he should follow Jack to his office. What he didn't realize he was waiting for was Hannibal following him.

Jack sits down behind his desk and clasps his hands together, waiting for him to elaborate.

"I was thinking, some officers can check into youth pastors in the areas near the murders and..." He trails off for a moment, trying to think of the best way to phrase this.

"And?" Jack leans forward.

"Gay bars the victims used to frequent, see if they had any of those in common. And post a

few people in places they did have in common, try to lure him in." Will looks down at his hands as he says it, knowing he's going to be one of the posted agents. "He seems to have a type, troubled gay or bisexual men with an obvious vice. It doesn't matter what that vice is, it just has to fit into one of the deadly sins."

Jack nods slowly, considering this. "I'll get my best men on it." His eyes flick over Will.

He is so screwed.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry about the inconsistency in updating, I have no excuse other than some chapters being hard to write. Thank you for your patience.

Also, I won't abandon this fic no matter how long it is between updates. Unless I say otherwise later on.

Reverse Kronos

Chapter Summary

Will relives some childhood memories and struggles in a therapy session with Hannibal.

Chapter Notes

Just to warn you now, most of this chapter is flashback and a good look at interactions of the past... and how they change Will today. Honestly I was gonna put more in this but I realized it was getting a little long, so it's going in the next one.

Have fun!

"Will? Are you with me?" A voice drifts to his consciousness, wrapping around him in the dark stream. Pulling him out of the soothing waters and dropping him back into the harsh air of reality.

"Hm?" He blinks a few times, a familiar study coming into focus in his view. The windows are dark, the only light in the room is coming from the lit fireplace in the room. The faint ticking of the clock keeps him grounded, yet makes his eye twitch.

"You were saying something a few moments ago. I feared you left the lights on and no one was home, so to speak." Hannibal folds his hands in his lap, his distant gaze taking in Will's condition.

"Yeah, sorry. What was I talking about?" Will closes his eyes and rubs the back of his neck, feeling the pulse of a headache coming on.

"Your dealings with religion and sexuality." Hannibal states passively, getting up to retrieve something from his desk.

"How did we get there?" Will looks up at him, brows furrowed and eyes curious. He smoothed his hands over the armrests, an uncomfortable subject to be sure.

"Our killer seems to have an intrinsic attachment to the two. We thought if you understood your own attachment, it would be easier to spot our killer while you are stationed at the bar." Hannibal replies, filling up two glasses of wine for them.

"Kinda bad to be drinking on the job, right Dr. Lecter?" He teases with a sardonic huff of a laugh, trying to uncoil the tension in his own body, feeling it seep into the air around him like waves.

"Well, considering our subject matter it seems best to approach it inebriated." Hannibal lets a hint of a smile cross his face for a moment, letting the ball fall into Will's court.

"Agreed." He takes the wine glass when it's offered to him, drinking in the scent of it before gulping part of it down. Will set a mirror to Lecter, in his own way. A twist of one another, elegant where the other is ragged. Demented where the other is sane, in their own way. Red where the other is blue, black where the other is white, their contrasts slowly colliding into shades of grey.

Hannibal crosses his legs, propping his journal on his lap. A picture of poise and quiet elegance as he puts his pen to paper, eyes tracking over the room.

Will smooths his hands down his jeans, trying to purge the sweat from his person as he sighs to himself. "Well, I already told you my dad was a bible thumper and I don't think that would be good for anyone's psyche, let alone a... bi kid. He wasn't exactly father of the year but, he didn't kick me out."

Will clings to the other boy, kissing him like he's the only person to matter in the world. Right now to Will, he is. The alleyway is dank and dark, the stones cold against his back.

He can barely remember the boy's name now, just how his touch felt like silk and put his shattered pieces together to seal them with gold. How his lips were chapped and rough, how his touched burned with passion and love.

He can remember that his hair was a halo of blond and his eyes were the color of whiskey in the light of a winter's day. He can remember that he tasted like lemonade and Satuday's spent at a carnival.

If he focuses he can still feel his body pressed against his, like that last night.

Will broke the kiss for a moment of breath, and just a moment too late.

His dad found him.

Will felt the other boy being ripped from his frozen fingertips, the feeling in his eyes shattering and the broken shards digging into his soul.

He can still feel the phantom bruises and breaks he got that day.

"On second thought... it would've been better if he kicked me out." Will shudders from the recollection of what happened all the times he was caught and the fear from when he wasn't, too much to enjoy it after that.

He takes a long drink from the wine glass, eyes closed. Will can still see the scene in his

minds eye.

"*We're leaving William." His father said coldly, packing up the last of his own clothes.*

"What, why?!" Will looked to him from the doorway of his room, his eyes darting over his form and ready for an attack.

"I got a job offer somewhere else." He says curtly, closing the suitcase. As usual, travelling light.

"What's wrong with the job you have now, or is this about something else?" Will crosses his arms and leans on the doorway.

"What else could it be about?" His father glares at him and grips onto his suitcase warningly now.

"You know what I'm talking about, we know that you don't approve of me. You want me out of here to see if it'll fix me!" Will pushes off the doorway and steps into the room, leaning downwards.

"Shut your goddamned mouth boy!" His father steps forward and smacks him down to the floor.

"Even with his... treatment I didn't leave, but we fought a lot and moved from place to place." Will looks down into the wine, red as blood and just as thick. He takes the last gulp of wine and sighs heavily.

"I barely knew him after we moved from Alabama. Then came Louisiana..."

"I'm not some puppet you can control any time you want Dad!" Will slammed his hands down onto the hardwood table, standing from his seat at the dinner table and looking his father in the eye.

"I'm tryin' to keep you from bringing attention to the fact you're a fucking faggot! You ain't going with them!" He stands up quickly enough for the chair to fall back onto the hardwood with a quick snap. Like the breaking of a twig... or bone.

"What's wrong with bringin' attention, huh?! What's wrong with being a faggot?!" Will moves away from the table between them, closer to the door... like he's preparing for something.

"The bible says it ain't right for a man to be lying with a man!"

"And the bible says it's right to hit your kid?! Or drink you damned life away?! You're a fucking disgrace in God's eyes so you have a disgrace as a son! Fucking deal wi-"

The punch lands straight to his jaw. "Shut your fuckin' mouth you damn queer!" Then another to his stomach.

Will doubled over from the pain, and landed with a thud from the next hit to the head.

Kick

KICK

CRACK

Will wails with pain and grabs his foot to make it stop, yanking it so he ends up on the floor. In a flurry of panic he grabs a kitchen knife from the counter and cuts right across his father's leg.

"We fought the evening before he left. It was something about going out with one of the few friends I had. He didn't leave a note, nothing. Just left me to fend for myself." Will is looking down into the empty glass before setting it down, the wine still feeling like it left an iron taste on his mouth. Familiar, yet foreign.

"You'll fucking pay for that!" The ox of a man got up just enough to try and pin down the slippery teen.

SLIP

Will heard more than felt the knife stab into his father's stomach, then he felt the sick urge to tear his knife downward. To gut him like a fish.

RRRRIIIIP

The sound of tearing fabric greeted him while he covered his father's mouth to muffle the screams. And now. One. Last. Cut. And a spurt of arterial spray covers his face, he keeps his mouth resolutely closed. But Will cannot tear his savage eyes away from the wine colored liquid that comes from what was his father.

Will pushes his father off of him easily and gets up, looking at the tile. Like blood on snow.

"First reason I knew he left was his suitcase was gone from the den, the clothes he left laying around a lot were gone too." Will is pacing around the study, running his fingers along the spines of the books.

Will stabbed and sliced off pieces of the bitter man, taking his fill of flesh. The boy moves like a man possessed, eyes glazed yet bright. His work was like that of an animal... Chaotic, yet elegant. A visceral beauty to this broken heap of unrecognizable blood and bone... just blood and bone now.

No consiousness to hate...

No voice to scream with...

No strength to break...

The savage eyed teen dropped the knife and shook, covered in the blood and sins of his father. Panicked, he gets the body into a bag and seals it shut.

Getting it into the back of the truck was harder than he thought it would be.

Then came the suitcase.

And the last of him was given to the alligators of the marshes.

"Let's just say, that morning, I was glad he was gone... Even if I did have to live on what rations he left." Will stops his circling and let's his fingers drift downwards before his hand falls to his slide.

Will came back home to clean off the blood.

12:00.

The clock kept ticking.

He cleaned the whole house, just so it wouldn't be suspicious. Bleach burned his nose and ate at his gloves at this point. By the time he was done it was 7:15 am and he was starving.

Will started the search for food in the barren kitchen, well except for... what he kept of him.

"It wasn't a good time." Will finishes, startled by the sudden ringing of his phone. Not only that but he could feel Dr. Lecter's eyes burning into his back. He knows he's lying but he can't know the truth.

Another long night for him it seems. But you know what they say.

No rest for the wicked.

Greed

Chapter Summary

The Chesapeake Ripper makes an appearance to give a message to Will. Afterwards, Will has some issues.

Chapter Notes

I have no idea what I'm doing.

"Why're you calling?" Will cut right to the chase, already on edge from the lack of sleep. He rubs his eyes and starts to pace around the study once more.

"Another body just dropped, I need you at the scene." Jack states calmly, sounds of a bustling scene filtering through the receiver.

"And I need sleep Jack... where is it?" The fight seeps out of Will, yawning as he stops his pacing and he gets a pen and paper to write down the address Jack rattles off. "See you there." Then he hangs up, putting his phone in his pocket.

"Sorry I have to cut our session short Dr. Lecter. Another body just dropped and I have to go check it out." Will goes to get his jacket, but Hannibal beats him to it and gets it on him.

"I'll drive you there." The other smooths over the shoulders of the jacket quickly before stepping back.

"No, no. It's fine." Will narrows his eyes at him from the casual touches, adjusting his sleeves and taking a step to go out the door.

"You've been disassociating more frequently recently, I feel it is in both our interests that I drive." Before Will could reply, Hannibal was leading them out the door. He, of course, followed him as though on a leash.

"Would you like to continue our conversation?" Hannibal leads him to the Bentley with an air of grace, like they're going on an afternoon drive and not to a crime scene at 10 o'clock at night.

"Do I have a choice?" Will sniped tiredly, getting in the driver side and buckling the seat belt.

"You always have a choice, Will." Hannibal replies, the purr of the engine seeming to roar in Will's ears. He needs rest.

"With you, it feels like I'm stripped of myself. We are both wanting the same things. Two mirrors reflecting each other." Will looks out the window, gazing up into the night sky as though it were a lover, that sense of... longing.

"What a beautiful thought. Do you see it that way?" Hannibal keeps his eyes on the desolate asphalt, feeling the shift in the air between them.

"No... just different." Before Hannibal can respond, Will turns up the music in the car; allowing the two to lapse into a comfortable silence.

Will stayed in the car for a few minutes after they've stopped, steeling himself for what he is about to see. He feels the cling of the darkness already but this time it's... different, comforting somehow, as if it were just showing him something he already knew. A guide just for him. A message.

With one last deep breath and gets out, what greets him at the scene makes him realize why it felt so different. It wasn't the same killer.

It was that same comforting presence, as though it was coming to hold his hand and guide him through the unknown woods. A candle in the darkness. Will really shouldn't feel this relieved seeing the work of a "copycat."

It looked as though blood was still dripping down onto the floor from the swinging body hung from the rafters... the arms and legs nowhere to be seen, merely a bloody torso and head, eviscerated. The definition of cruelty. But yet, it still has that poetic elegance he's known for... no pretenses, no true vendetta, just... brings brought to art. A wave of disgust and awe wash over him.

Will closes his eyes and lets the pendulum swing.

First, his arms and legs materialize back onto his body as though uncovered from a shroud. Then all the blood comes back inside of his body, a drop reversing its fall midair, time slowing to a crawl. The color returns to the man's face as the body falls down from the noose, collapsing onto the floor like a rag doll... bound and gagged.

"I've drugged him in his own home, it wasn't too hard to get inside." Will lifts the man onto the bed and drops him there, rolling out his tools onto the nightstand.

"I don't have much time though until he wakes up, I need him more efficiently bound for what I have in mind." He gets out some rope and ties his head and torso down to the bed tightly, followed by each extremity to the bed frame. Spread out like a feast, unaware like a lamb to slaughter.

"I start the process of cutting off his leg, careful and calculated to make sure not to cut an

artery too soon." The drug numbed the pain, but not so much as to keep him from waking up screaming.

"There is the squealing pig I've chosen. Now it's time for my true work to start." With one swift cut, Will severed the man's left leg from his body. Then came the arm... soon he was a screaming, crying bloody stump.

"I finish what I need for my display, my hint. He will know what it means." Will hangs what's left of the man from the noose he created. Finished.

"I make my escape from whence I came. I am dissatisfied with my display. It's crude, inelegant. This is not my design."

Will stumbles back, hit with a wave of realization and nausea.

This isn't good.

The Chesapeake Ripper was trying to help him.

He feels himself hit the wall, staring unseeingly at the bloodstained walls. Then a wave lapped at his legs... and another... and another. Will feels himself wading into the stream not of his own volition. He struggles against the pull, the rapid waters.

He was sinking.

Will startles when a hand clap against both his shoulders and hears that familiar voice, coated around his mind like chocolate. "Will? I need you here with me. Was did you see?"

He takes a gasp of air when he was expecting only water to come out of his lungs, coughing up one word. "Ripper." Then he feels that calming hand on the back of his neck, thumb teasing at the curls near the base of his head. Left... Right... left... right.

Will starts to breathe in time with the movement, the grips of panic slowly loosening their hold on his throat. "He left a message for me." It sounds like he swallowed saltwater.

"What did he say?" Hannibal's voice is even, almost unconcerned if it weren't for that look in his eyes. Soft, caring... curious.

"I'm still trying to figure that out." He lowers his eyes, feeling pinned yet cherished. A dangerous, heady combination for him, too much can get him addicted. Will reluctantly steps to the side, knowing the blush that dances across his cheeks.

Now to deal with Jack.

"So?" Jack has his hands in his pockets, looking as if he's looking down at Will.

"It's not our guy." Will has cleared the water from his lungs, only a remaining afterburn of salt lingering on his face and in his throat.

"Who is it then?" Jack's voice is measured, equally seething and tranquil. A calm before a storm that Will needed to navigate quickly.

"A copycat." Will feels the lie- no, half-truth slip through his teeth before he could stop it. It tasted like dark chocolate, bittersweet words sliding off of his tongue.

"Why would anyone copy this guy?" Jack's hand are out of his pockets now, questioning with that seething slipping into his tone.

"Someone who wants to send a message, that wants our killer caught. The copycat sees his victims as pigs, not sheep from a wayward flock like the guy we're looking for. He sees the other as crude, inelegant and it disgusts him... telling us that our killer is greedy, handsy. He wants me to know what to watch out for." Will feels himself sway as he speaks, the nausea taking over once more along with vertigo. He couldn't look straight at Jack even if he wanted to. "It was practically gift wrapped." Will spits now, pushing himself off the wall despite his head's protests to the movement.

"Now, does anyone have any aspirin?" He feels the water creeping in before it all goes black. It was almost calming, if it wasn't for how fast it overtook him. The waters were dark, muddied by what he brought into it, clinging to him like leeches. Will sees the Ravenstag once more, serene in its observation of him.

"You should be more careful Will." The Windigo was speaking to him from the banks in that accent... whose was it again? What was he talking about?

"With what?" Will sounds groggier than he felt, he couldn't feel the words coming from him as though they were distant from himself.

"You haven't consumed more than coffee and aspirin in the past three days. You fainted, and I'm not sure you're with us fully." The Windigo has his clawed hand pressed up against his forehead as though feeling for a fever, while the other was gently pressed on his shoulder.

"Us?" He blinks confusedly, looking to the Ravenstag in the distance.

"Jack and I. It seems I am correct in my suspicions, what do you see dear Will?" His voice is so calming, he feels like he can fall asleep again.

"Can you tell him to leave?" Will counters, looking to what must be Jack. Before the Windigo can say anything, the Ravenstag bows his head in assent and walks off into the woods. He sighs with relief and touches the cheek of the Windigo.

"What am I to you?" He breathes out onto the skin of his wrists, teeth sharp enough to rip through skin and bone.

"A monster... black as blood, clawed with fangs like daggers, antlers like branches and as deadly as swords." Will knows he is imagining it, but he sees a smug smile cross the monster's lips.

"And Jack?" He seems unfazed by his confession, still caressing him with his talons.

"A stag, black and feathery." He breathes, still looking into the eyes of the beast.

"Where are you?" The Windigo keeps from confirming or denying what he's seeing, not diluting the illusion with the logic of this world. And somehow that sting more than what damage those claws can do, rending upon his flesh like a lash.

"I'm in a stream, the water is muddy. You're standing in here with me, Jack was on the bank." Will moves his hand to the back of his neck, holding the monster close. No escape for either of them.

"Repeat after me. You are in my home in Baltimore, Maryland." The Windigo's claws are starting to recede, his teeth far less menacing.

"I am in your home in Baltimore, Maryland." Will watches as the looming figure came down to his height.

"It is 1:14 am, and your name is Will Graham." And once again he sees the person suit that hides the monster that oh so lovingly cradled him.

"It is 1:14 am, and my name is... Will Graham." Will stumbles out, his voice own rattling in his own ears.

He really needs to take care of himself better, but if the I'll treatment gets him held like this... it's worth it.

Wrath

Chapter Summary

Will encounters the seven deadly sins killer, it goes about as well as you would expect.

Chapter Notes

Welp, this is gonna be an interesting chapter. It's also a little shorter than the others so please bear with it.

This is offically the worst assignment he's been given in awhile. Will may be a fisherman but he isn't used to being the bait on the end of the hook. It wasn't exactly a good feeling... but it wasn't bad either.

He feels a sort of nervous anticipation building up within himself as he looks around the darkened bar, watching the patrons with a sardonic eye. Appraising each person of their worth as though a jewel under a microscope.

None of the glistening bodies catch his eye, not even the one's who offered to buy him a drink. Though some were handsome, or charming, he couldn't just bring himself to play the part with them. Will could just keep to himself and watch the people passing by, drinking his whisky. That is until one man slides into the chair next to him.

"Hello there, first time here?" A smooth voice asks from his side, almost soft in his tone if it weren't for the music. Will feels the need to look this one in the face for this rejection. And what he saw floored him.

The low light shined off of his tan skin, almost reminding him of caramel which... made his mouth water involuntarily. His eyes are like obsidian shining in moonlight, glowing in the pink light as though a fireplace. His grin is triumphant, like getting Will to look at him was an accomplishment. Considering what has happened tonight... it is.

When he shifts closer as if to whisper a secret, his curls shine like starlight along with his glasses. With a closer look he sees he had a lithe frame, a dancer maybe, or a runner... his clothes were tight nonetheless which is most likely by design. Seems he was staring too long.

"What is it pretty boy, cat got your tongue?" One hand rests on his leg now in that lean.

"Do you know how many times I heard that line tonight, may as well have asked if I'm from Tennessee." Will scoffs and shifts his leg away from the touch.

"I'm sorry, you're right. I'm Thomas, Thomas Jackson. And you are?" Thomas turns that charming smile to him again, holding out his hand to at least hope for a handshake.

"Tired and irritated, so if you're looking for a hook up leave now." He replies, not even bothering to give him a handshake before turning back to drink his whiskey. Will could feel the darkness pulsing off of him in waves, try to draw him into the riptide.

"Oh no, just a good conversation. You seemed interesting, turning away the prettiest guys and all." He turns to order a drink from the bartender.

"And you think I won't make you turn tail." He takes a gulp of the last of his own whiskey and sighs, looking away from him now. When Will thinks about it, Thomas looks like just a boy compared to him, all soft skin and angles.

"Exactly, would you allow me to buy you a drink?" Thomas raises a brow, resting his head on his hand. The light keeps changing, making him see him from every shadow, every flash of darkness he can see in those eyes.

"Yeah, whiskey on the rocks." Will lays his head down on the bar, letting his eyes settle from all the lights and the dizzying feeling of people all around him, all of the feelings and strange thoughts.

As the two speak and drink, it gets worse and worse as though a haze descended upon his being. There is an easy explanation to it but he just doesn't want to believe it. A spider stuck in another's web.

Thomas's words taste of black coffee and the sickly sweet air of citrus, weighing heavy on his tongue like a dark spirit. Will feels his mind grow dark, his own tongue numb and useless under the oppressive colored lights that beg for his undivided attention, he feels his heart slowing despite his anxiety at looking at the other man, his darkness intertwining with the fading edges of his vision.

"Let's go home Will." Thomas says, hauling him out of the bar stool and slowly escorting him out of the building as though a helper.

No more strength to fight. Game over.

Will struggles weakly against the pull and tries to keep his eyes open but to no avail. Then it all goes black.

The sound of slowly swinging rope and aching pain in his shoulders greets him as he wakes. Will slowly opens his eyes to an awfully lit basement, sparce in its furnishings and decoration... if meat hooks, plastic and sterile tile could be considered decoration.

He yanks on the ropes, hearing the metal hook creak in protest as footsteps approach the

plastic that's hiding the rest of the room from him. He tries to kick at the intruder, his feet swinging in time with their bindings.

"Oh, I had hoped you wouldn't be awake for this. You seem like you can be fixed, but I need to make a point." Soon, a set of tools comes into his view near his knees. Knives, scapels, pliers, even scissors.

"What point?" Will asks groggily, the drugs are still leaving him weak in the body but the haze over his mind is fading quickly like the morning sun has risen. He's looking for a way out of this, only to find he's trussed up like an unruly rooster close to slaughter.

"To give up looking for me." Thomas picks up a scalpel and twirls it in his fingers with a flourish. He's dangerously close to his ankles now.

Will knows he needs to stall.

"Father, you can't say you're holy. You killed all those people..." Will murmurs, knowing that's truly the only thing he values. The swinging is dizzying in his mind, looking to the corner he thinks he sees telltale antlers in the shadows.

"I released them my son, you must understand. I see it in your eyes." The scalpel traces his leg without intent, raising red in its wake. Will hisses with the feeling clenching up in his chest from that.

"You broke one of the commandments, thou shalt not kill. I can't abide by that." Will can feel himself getting clearer and clearer every word, kicking out at him fruitlessly.

"No, it's thou shalt not murder. I didn't murder them, it was mercy. I saved them from their sins, like how I'll save you." In a mock of mercy, of intimacy, he caresses his leg and kisses his thigh as though to soothe him.

The scalpel cuts into the fat of his foot agonizingly slowly, tearing a scream from Will's lungs and burning the air around them with the sound. At first it only stung then it felt like a fire burning him from the inside out. His thrashing made the rusty meat hook creak and groan in protest, only adding to the haunted noises of this place.

Then with one last creak, Will falls to the tile as though his wings were burned. His fall causes the tools next to him to clatter to the floor. He hisses with the pain of the landing.

Before Thomas can react, Will grabs a knife and tackles him to the floor. It isn't much of a fight considering how weak he is.

SLIP

RRRIIIIPPPP

Easy, quick, and fucking painful. He feels the blood cover him as the anxious calm takes over. His body goes numb to the aches and pains covering him as he stabs...

Over.

And over.

And over.

By the time he feels in control of himself, the man is a bloody pulp under him. Terrified, he backpedals into a corner and cuts his bonds.

And then the sound of sirens fill his ears.

Icarus

Chapter Summary

The aftermath of the killing and Will's mental state.

Chapter Notes

Guys, I offically don't know what the fuck I'm doing but I hope you like the fuckery I have decided to spread like sour cream on toast.

Good luck.

By the time Jack gets to him, Will is shivering and still sitting near the body.

The blood covers his bare skin, turning parts of his body as black as midnight and the darkness in his eyes adds to the fear that Will knows grips Jack's heart that fell into his stomach. Will feels hollow now, the adrenaline and dopamine of the kill drained from his muscles it just left him with...

Fear.

Pure unadulterated fear flows through his veins. Not of the consquences, not at all no.

He's afraid of himself.

Will drops the knife and comes back into this painful moment, his hands shaking in their bindings. Then he feels blood lapping at his feet like warm waves of water, the blackness of his vision consuming him. He feels as if he's standing in a river of red, only warmed by the frozen breeze of the moonlit night.

Through the warmth of the blood, he hears muffled voices. "Hasn't... responsive... in... hours." Who is that? The voice is deep, familiar. It makes his gut twist in a mockery of fear and leaves a taste of raw ginger in his mouth, a cotton feeling overtaking it.

"Why... here? He needs... doctor." This one is much better, it's accented... smooth, comforting. It hums in his chest and feels like sweet coffee coating his tongue.

"You... doctor, so treat him." The earlier voice comes back to him in his skull, rattling it this

time and it just didn't feel right.

Then touch fills him, every piece of his body and fragmented mind comes to focus on that one point on the back of his neck. His head swims when he opens his eyes to rest on the maroon eyes he knows so well. Will can't find it in himself to respond to his words he is sure is coming from Hannibal.

Will smiles in a daze, his touch is so warm, so nice... but he looks so sad. What happened? Then it comes back to him in a rush of acid and bile. He dry heaves, still nothing in his stomach but whiskey and his own stomach lining.

He killed someone, he honest to God killed someone. Again. He promised himself he wouldn't give in to the urge... no, no. It was self defense. But he was caught, he was covered in blood and he was still holding the knife. Is he under arrest? No, they must know what happened. But if they investigate....

Will needs to get out of there. Now.

Will tries to scurry out of there with what little strength he has, falling back into the wall as he heads for what he thinks it a door. He feels hands grab onto his shoulders and pull him back into... warmth, all encompassing warmth. He feels himself relax into... is that someone's arms? Will can't help but sink into it, bury his face against his chest.

"It's alright Will, it's alright." A broad and calloused palm smooth over his hair, allowing him to just breathe. They know what happened, he isn't handcuffed. There is no shackles on his legs... nothing. Just arms holding the broken pieces in place.

"What happened?" Will slurs, may as well know what they think. It may help him later... what is he thinking, he doesn't need an alibi for doing this. He was nearly killed and he was merely defending himself. No need to keep panicking.

Will takes a deep breath in... out, slowly. He feels the haze of water lift from inside his lungs. The panic recedes with the tide. He's okay.

"I was hoping you could tell us, Will." Hannibal says quietly, as though anything louder would break him like an old teacup. His arms are warm, like a blanket protecting him from the monsters.

"I... I don't remember much. Thomas came up to me and... he put me off somehow, he just didn't seem quite right." Will takes a breath, eyes closing in his focus on recalling that night through the drug induced haze. "Then things went hazy I-I think he put something in my drink and I woke up hanging by a meat hook... he said something about a message and redemption before there was a searing pain."

Will considers his next words carefully, he can't reveal too much of his thinking or he's doomed. He doesn't even notice Hannibal turning him to look him in the eyes. "I was struggling and the hook broke, I was so afraid..." he takes a shivering breath. "I got the knife and I... I killed him. I was so afraid of him getting back up I must've... must've kept going."

Hannibal cups his cheek, checking his glazed eyes it seems. He can see him reliving the kill. Those red eyes consider him carefully, assessing what the broken man before him can handle. "You'll have to come out of the field for a few days, I need to do a psychological evaluation on you. This is just to help Jack sleep at night." He sighs softly. "You're not in trouble, we just need to see if you are alright."

He rests his head on his chest with a heavy sigh, holding onto the other weakly, his voice soft as silk. "Okay... okay." Will feels himself coming back fully into his own mind. "I can talk to them now... thank you."

Will's perception blurs while he makes his statement over and over to each investigator, each forensic worker. At least the blood was cleaned off. He doesn't know if it's better or worse if the evidence is off him. The proof that it happened somehow just... felt right, that it wasn't some twisted dream conjured by his fractured mind, the fractles forming into a nightmarish burn into his skull. He still thinks he can smell the black copper covering him. The day passes in a blur until he was left alone with his darkened thoughts.

Hannibal came into the room quiet as a panther moving through the trees, sitting beside him. "How are you feeling Will?" He puts his hand upon his shoulder gently as to not startle him.

He looks up dazedly to him, his eyes as dark as a night of a blue moon and as stormy as the Pacific. "Tired... can I go home?" Will's body is sagging like a limp puppet on strings.

"In a few minutes, I just want to clear up some things before I take you home. Is that alright?" He holds his shoulder, an anchor in these, silent, turbulent waters. It was both something he wanted to lean into or shrug off the burn of his touch. So he just stays.

Will nods slowly, his skin still as pale as moonlight. Past the panic, past the shock and now just... resting. He feels like he should be horrified, he is but... is he really? It doesn't feel any worse than the first time... or the second. Is this really the third now? He is offically a serial killer, still feeling the pang of remorse how pathe- not pathetic, it's natural.

He feels the questions pass in a daze until he can finally go home. All he wants to do now is sleep... maybe he can avoid the nightmares that are sure to come in the loneliness of the night.

Jericho Rising

Chapter Summary

Will learns more about how he feels about killing with a therapy session with Hannibal.

Chapter Notes

This is kind of a setting up chapter, it's basically another therapy session that sets up for more mental havoc. Very dialogue based and mentally driven.

I'm also a little off my rocker while I wrote this, so have fun reading the rantings of a cracked out squirrel!

It burns. It burns so much.

He can hear his words echoing in the auditorium of his skull, taking up so much more time than he should. He's dead. He still shouldn't be speaking. He can't speak!

"Stop! You're not supposed to be here!" Will screams from the seat he's in... the only one in the audience, looking upon the proscenium like a story book divide between them.

Thomas takes a hold of the microphone and smiles against it. "Aren't I? It's so comfortable up here. You can hear my message even after you made sure it was over. But, you made a mistake."

"What was it?! I'll fix it, please just give me peace!" Will stood and pleaded with the pastor in front of him.

"Oh this is something you can't fix... you let me in. You saw yourself in me, in what I did. You felt the righteousness, the power. So... you're stuck with me." Thomas sat down on the stage, fiddling with the wire of the microphone. Looking close at his shirt now, Will could see the blood pouring through it, the stab wounds the... the gutting. "I get to make my point... you're just as messed up as me."

Will is jolted out of his thoughts by a hand on his shoulder, splayed wide. His eyes follow the toned arm slowly up to Hannibal's face. "Will, where did you go?" The accented voice asks, his hand moving away slowly.

"Nowhere... I don't know. It was dark and I-I heard his voice." Will looks down again and his hands that he had in his lap, fiddling with the seam of his jeans.

"What did he say to you?" They both know who Will is speaking of, Hannibal just wants to know what he's projecting into the theatre of his skull.

"That I'm... I'm just like him. It's only a matter of time." He's standing now, his friend's *(when did he actually start thinking of him like that?)* hand no longer on his shoulder. His feet take him across the study on their own accord, then back again.

Hannibal watches his feet gliding over the wooden floor with unknowable grace, calculating his next response to the man in front of him. His words settled across his vision like a veil of webs. "Do you believe that, Will?" He stands silently and moves into his path.

Will collides with him like blood hitting snow, bouncing off but still leaving a print. The frost in his eyes melts into slush as he looks into the other's. "Y-no... I don't know. I don't know what to believe Dr. Lecter. I mean, I killed a man in cold blood and I..."

He raises a brow and touches his friend's wrist, silently prompting him to go on. "What did you feel in that moment, when the deed was done?"

He sighs and looks to where they are touching, his wrist encircled by Hannibal's hand. Caught in more ways than one. "I felt... powerful... righteous and-and like I fixed... everything." Will reaches up and wipes his hand down his face. "Then when it was over..."

"It all came crashing down upon you." Hannibal finishes, his hand moving up to his shoulder and he presses his forehead against the top of Will's.

"Yeah... yeah. But I felt... calm for awhile. Then I heard the sirens." He doesn't seem to mind the contact, if anything he welcomes it. Or he doesn't notice it, the warmth of his skin seems to be absorbed at where they connect.

"You came back to yourself." Hannibal states, testing the waters between them. His hand moves to the side of his neck, settling on his pulse and it's almost calm, at least steady.

"No, I was pulled away from myself... for once I was free." Will shrinks away from him now, like a doe in the face of a hungry pack of wolves, surrounded with nowhere to go.

"Tell me Will, do you think it will be harder to imagine what other killers do now that you have killed on your own?" He asks directly, allowing him to retreat physically but continuing the onslaught on his mind. Lending himself to crumble his walls like the city of Jericho.

He nods sheepishly after a brief moment of consideration, a knowing look crossing his face. "You're not going to rubber stamp me, are you?"

"You are correct, you need more time to recover. We both know each other well enough that me rejecting this would not impede further progress. Correct?" Hannibal tilts his head towards him, hands going behind his back.

"Correct. I'm... I'm glad actually. Means I don't have to see anymore of... of that. At least for a little while." Will sighs with relief, body like a puppet on loose strings.

"Because you are tired of the dark places." Hannibal boldly takes a step closer, knowing the weight of this statement... and Will's answer.

"No, because when I go to the dark places, I-I bring something back." Will stays, still looking away, rubbing the back of his neck.

"When you went the latest time, you brought a new sense of yourself... and all the nightmares that come with it. Invading your waking moments." Hannibal knows exactly what putting these words in the light of day could mean, even in the safety of his office.

"I brought a monster, Dr. Lecter." Will snaps, looking to him now like the turbulant waters of the Dead Sea itself. His hand goes back down to his side, fists clenched and teeth bared.

"Even the most noble of people can be seen as monsters in the eyes of man. So, what prospective are you seeing yourself from? Society, or your own?" Hannibal counters, chin raised and posture impeccable, the picture of civilized.

"Does it really matter?" Will deflates, shoulders sagging, ire still clinging to the edges of his tone.

"Every glimpse matters, even in a reflection." Hannibal says, stepping close once more to the man he aligned himself with.

Will hopes that that's all he gets to see of that... thing inside of him, or there will be a lot more blood spilt on this spiral he can already feel himself falling into. And he can't guarantee it won't be his own.

Patroclus

Chapter Summary

We meet Tyler Price, his grief... and how he copes with it.

Chapter Notes

This is yet another set up chapter but trust me, it will work out in a couple of chapters. Plus, we get to meet new characters!

Have fun!

He pushes open the glass door in front of him, conscious of the smell lingering upon his jacket. A slight burn, like the smell of oak and moss, clinging to the back of his throat, his skin, his unruly curls, branding him in this house of law as a deviant.

"I need to file a missing persons report." The man adjusts his jacket around himself and puts his hands into his pockets. He hides his eyes behind his veil blood red curls, oily and shaggy in their appearance.

"Your name please?" The officer asks, looking down at the man in front of him. He notes the earthly scent but elects to ignore it.

"Tyler Price." Now he looks up, startling, bloodshot, green eyes meeting the others in a look only few would consider friendly.

The other is unfazed in his assessment, writing it down on the page. "When did you last see your friend?"

"Three weeks ago. We had an argument and... he left our house." Tyler shifts uncomfortably where he stands, seeming to wince at the word friend.

"What was that arguement about Mr. Price?" He won't look up from the page now.

"Something stupid, we argued about it a lot. I'm kind of a slob so... but it always feels like more than that in the moment, you know? Like he's arguing about something else with me." He takes his hands out of his pockets, shrugging lightly as he tries to gather his thoughts.

"What does your friend look like?" He seems to be truly listening now.

"Tall, about 6 foot. Dark skinned like, like caramel. Brownish eyes and black hair. Sharp face and clean shaven." Tyler recites this by heart, his eyes focused on the middle distance.

"And the name?" A customary and obvious question, but it can make or break something.

"Thomas Alexander Jackson." Tyler speaks it with such reverance, like a breath of a prayer upon his lips of what he thinks is a holy man. His eyes go to the counter in front of them, not knowing where else to land.

In this case, it broke something. The officer hisses through his teeth and shakes his head. "I'm... I'm so sorry sir, he's dead."

He freezes and looks him in the eye now. "What?" His eyes hold fire, intensity along with the cracking ice of his soul.

"Thomas Jackson was killed two weeks ago before he could be apprehended. I'm sorry Mr. Price." The officer tries to look sympathetic, but Tyler can see right through that mask of his. He can feel a snarl trapped behind his teeth, threatening the back of his throat with a growl.

Tyler leaves without another word.

The drive home is a haze of lights and sounds and just... green. His mind is elsewhere as his body tries to bring him home. He has no home anymore. Just an empty house filled with smoke and mirrors.

He doesn't want to look into any of them.

By the time he gets through the door his lungs are burning with restrained hellfire, smoke coming out on every breath, every withheld scream. Tyler tries to sit but his energy says otherwise, biting at his lip ring he gauges the room... before putting a hole straight through the wall.

The man screams in anguish, anger overriding every other emotion he could possibly feel. His all encompassing rage presses right at his heart. Right where Thomas should be.

Tyler rips and rends each place that makes his mind flicker to the man he once called love. He throws his favourite picture of them at the door and revels in the crack of wood, the shattering of glass, his own screams... then nothing.

He is numb.

And he is gone.

He falls to his knees in front of the broken picture frame and starts sobbing into his bloodied hands. Tyler can't handle this alone. He hasn't been alone since... no. One thing at a time. Tyler can feel then wrenching of his heart, the heat in his blood, the fire within him. Then the

feel of the aching emptiness of his soul without its partner, the calming coupling of the two. An even spilt.

Whoever did this, will pay for what they've done in blood.

Then, there's nothing. No emotion clinging to his mind to overthrow the decision he has come to. He is the calm before the storm, the hit before pain blooms.

Tyler gets up and starts his research. What exactly did Thomas do to deserve this? To be killed instead of arrested, so he wouldn't have even been told what happened.

Scrolling headline after headline, speculation after speculation, he finally comes upon something that he can go off of. Tattlecrime isn't the best name for a news-site, but he knows what happened... and who broke his everything.

Will Graham.

He smiles wickedly to himself and starts scouring Facebook, armed with what little knowledge he has he comes upon his profile. It may not have much on his personal likes and dislikes except dogs. But it did tell him that he was single, living alone in the middle of nowhere and had what looks like nine dogs. Not the hardest place he's broken into.

He needs more. He needs to know who he truly is. Submit him to judgement. But how... there was a phone number on that site, if he gives some about Thomas he may be able to get some on Graham. It may be worth a shot.

Tyler gets out his phone, dialing the number he remembers from the article. Here goes nothing.

"Freddie Lounds speaking." He is surprised by the voice on the other side, he expected something more grinding against his nerves. That will probably come soon enough.

"Hey, my name is Tyler Price. I think I have some info you could find useful on Thomas Jackson." Tyler replies, right down to business. He feels acid rising onto his tongue from this, even the thought of sharing his memory with a stranger hurts... but if it gets him what he needs to avenge it...

"What do you have to share?" The woman asks, the sound of a notepad and pen on the other side.

"I'm not exactly gonna share it without a price." He feels his lip curl into the mockery of a smile, a smirk settling onto his features at her eagerness. She'll give him everything he needs.

"Name it and I'll see if I can pay." Freddie's voice is nonchalant, like she can go without this vital piece.

"It's not money, but a trade. Information for information. I want to know more about Will Graham." Tyler toys with his lip piercing, his tongue flicking against the ring.

"When can we meet Mr. Price?" All business, straight to the point. Shaking on the deal.

"Tomorrow, noon. I'll text you the address if that's alright." He grins to himself. Hook, line, and sinker.

"Of course. See you then." Freddie ends the call and the other of course texts the address. Seems he made a gamble, now... time to put in all the chips.

Tyler makes the call to cancel his shift tomorrow because he has an important appointment involving his roommate. Now, to medicate.

He gets up from his perch on his couch to get his pipe and lighter, feeling the anxiety and pain eat away at him already.

Right when he lights up, he collapses back into his seat. The numbness seeps over him, the haze of calm earthy scent hides the burns of existence away from him... at least for awhile. A clean, clear high just like Thomas loved with him. The clear thoughts, the knowing. He knew his footing with him, how in sync they were... how in love they were. Thomas loved when he wasn't so overtaken with these thoughts but... did he really love him? Was he just causing him pain?

Tyler takes another hit to clear that line of thinking, purging him of the pain and just leaving the good. He turns on his music and lets it blast... letting the waves of sound overtake him.

Troy

Chapter Summary

> Revenge is a dish best served cold, and it is sweet. It can also fail at any time. We see how well Will and Tyler deal with it.

Chapter Notes

> Hey guys, sorry this one took awhile I had trouble with the ending and coordination of scenes. I think it came out okay, it's a little long. I had fun making this, and I hope you have fun reading it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Tyler turns his music higher in his earbuds, scrolling through another news article on the man named Will Graham. He honestly only gets enough to know he's a good cop. A good fighter until recently, he's been ill... at least that's what his frequent blackouts say. Sounds like he can have a mean streak too. But he won't know until Freddie gets here.

And she's late.

He's been sitting in this godforsaken café for thirty minutes past their meeting time, trying to keep himself in focus enough that he doesn't space out. It's harder with how much he had to smoke to feel ready.

Tyler is jarred out of his thoughts by the ringing of the front bell, the door opening with a wooden creak. A redhead with untamed curls and heart stepped through, looking around as though lost. "Looking for me, Lounds?" He pipes up with an easy grin, it's getting easier to feel okay with this. Doesn't mean it doesn't hurt though.

"Mr. Price?" Freddie tilts her head at him before sitting down across from the other. She puts a recorder on the table between them, a formality... a sign of trust.

"Tyler, please." He puts his hand out to shake, right over the recorder. A tight grip on both sides, tense but not uncivil.

"Well Tyler, thank you for waiting. I had some issues with my last appointment." Freddie pulls her hand away and clicks the recorder on.

"Well I'm just glad you've made it here, I deadass thought you were gonna stand me up." Tyler chuckles lightly, a grin still hinting at his face as he leans back in his chair, assessing the woman in front of him.

"I would never do that, I may keep you waiting but I won't forget." She smiles right back and leans forward. "Can you state your name again for the record?" Her voice is sickly sweet to him, grating on his already frayed nerves.

"Tyler Price." He turns off the screen of his phone, music still playing through his earbud. He'll just have to keep his eyes focused on other things to keep from spacing, her look is overwhelming to say the least... so it helps somewhat.

"And what was your relationship to Thomas?" Freddie leans forward, her eyes catching a light of interest that made his stomach turn.

"He-he was my roommate and... and we were together for awhile." Tyler swallows around the lump that formed in his throat, hand to his face. He really should have smoked more, toying with the piercing in his lip.

"As in...?" Tyler could see she was messing with him, she knew what he meant but he had to keep his cool to get what he wanted.

"I loved him, and in some fucked up part of my mind I think he loved me. But I deadass don't know if he killed those people because of me or in spite of me." He can feel himself coming back to the present, right where he can't handle being.

"What can you tell me about him?" Her 'welcoming' smile made him want to feed her her teeth. So it's best that he blocked out the rest of this meeting in his mind. Tyler hates giving up information like this, he feels like those things about Thomas are his and noone elses but... he has to humanize him to them. He has to do something to make them see... he wasn't a monster.

Tyler startles when his phone buzzes, opening it he sees an email with a subject line merely saying "Will Graham". Perfect, exactly what he needed right now. Each word gives him more information than the last, leaving him with a lasting picture.

An unstable man from the southern parts of the states with a laundry list of accomplishments in the police force, he was going places. Until he got hurt in the line of duty, stabbed in the left shoulder... that can be useful. Then Graham left the force, wrote a few papers and now teaches at Quantico. As well as being a consultant for Jack Crawford... a lapdog for the FBI. Could be a problem if he goes missing. But he is unstable... could be excusable.

With that last piece of information, Tyler gets up and gets his knife. He starts to sharpen the blade, humming a jaunty tune he heard from Thomas before he... left.

This'll be the fight of my life.

With every soft scraping noise of the blade, his grin sharpens to a fine point and cuts the air

of the otherwise silent apartment. And soon... he's ready. He stands and sheaths the knife on his side.

Tyler gets his phone out and plans the route to Will's home, out in the middle of nowhere... this will take awhile. Four hours at least, this can give him enough time to build his plan to the fullest, or he can lose his nerve.

But he isn't the type of man to back down.

Time passes in a blur of smoky highways and fiery headlights that seem to burn into his retinas. The smog in the autumn air clings to back of his throat, suffocating yet comforting in the pain of the chill. His mind is on fire with possibilities to make Graham suffer as he is suffering, he wants to take something-- no someone he cares about and turn them into a bloody pulp. But he has no one.

Tyler doesn't know if that makes this easier or harder.

He turns off his headlights when he comes close to the isolated cabin, the lights inside made it... beautiful. He sees a ship on a turbulant ocean. And it's going to sink because of him.

He drives slowly since he is practically blind in this inky black midnight. The crunching of the gravel and dirt under his tires is almost comforting in its own way, a calm before the storm. The stars twinkle dimly above him, clinging close to the light of the full moon in his path as if watching over him. He wishes for it to stop, for the man in the moon to shield his eyes from the atrocity he is about to commit... he doesn't want the light to reveal his sin.

Tyler gets out of the car and pulls on his gloves, securing his hat upon his head. *Quick and deep. Make sure each stab goes quick and deep.* He reminds himself as he walks slowly to the back door of the cabin, avoiding what light he can that is pouring over the ground.

The backdoor is easy to pick, swinging open with a slow creak that had him cringing away from it... then the patter of dog feet.

Tyler takes a deep breath, stamping down his fear and pulling out the cuts of meat he had in a bag he carried from the car. A necessary evil when hunting Graham down, no need for a pack of dogs giving him even more of a disadvantage. He dangles the cuts for them and throws them out the door, watching them dash into the night.

But, all isn't exactly good for him. The tell-tale sound of bare feet hitting tile echoes in his ears. He has about five seconds to sprint into the night and pray that he found his car in the midnight sea. Now or never, the fork in the road he has to take.

In that split second before silence turned into complete chaos, Tyler makes his decision.

He will take what he's owed.

Tyler charges at the sound, knife drawn and ready for blood to sate the burn in the back of his throat. Then he hears the crack of his wrist before he feels it. The knife clatters to the floor

and slides into the kitchen cabinet.

He feels his heart beating in his ears and his blood singing in his veins. His breath burns the air between them.

He tries to yank out of his grip, pulled forward with fury then...

CRACK

Tyler feels something warm run down his face, the world is tilting and spinning... he falls to the floor. Before Graham can do anything, he sweeps his leg blindly at his ankles. Then he's right down there with him.

Tyler rolls on top of him and raises his fist, his other hand pinning him by the neck.

SMACK

SMACK

Then he feels a foot hit his chest, hitting him right back against the counter. Yanked back by his wrist and turned on a dime into a chokehold, he yelps and kicks right at Graham's leg like a bucking horse.

He snarls in pain as Tyler stumbles right into the counter once more.

Tyler fumbles for a second, thinking through his options. Dive for the knife or grab the whiskey glass. He picks up the glass in a tight grip and whips around, swinging it right at Graham's head.

SMACK

He goes down to the floor, dazed in a heap of drunken pain. The other follows him down.

SMACK

SMACK

CRACK

The glass shatters into Tyler's hand, staggering back and standing from the pain, frantically trying for any option. Now's his chance.

Graham gets up, hitting him in the temple to send him to the floor. Grabbing a pair of zipties he turns the other man over. Tyler struggles and snarls like an animal before the zipties pull tightly around his wrists.

Then he goes limp under him. "Just kill me, let me have some kind of peace. Don't make me live in a world without him." His voice is only a ghost of the fury he once held, a plea for

mercy... and for it all to be over.

"Without who?" Graham asks after a moments hesitation, hand still on the back of the man's neck to secure him to the floor.

"Thomas... he was my everything. And you took him from me... seems fitting for you to take my life too. So do it." Tyler spits out, his teeth bared. "If I can't kill you I've failed him. So send me to the grave, you won. Kill me and live with it. Know that my memory and my anger will shake God's throne and burn your soul."

Graham considers the man under him, bitter and desperate. Vulnerable and strong... Familiar yet foreign. This man has lost all he stood for and every reason to continue on now that he's failed to kill him.

A rush of pity fills his heart as he stands to reach to the kitchen counter.

Chapter End Notes

Come visit me at disturbedbycoffee on Tumblr! Validation is my lifeblood!

Achilles

Chapter Summary

Will makes his decision, and enacts his punishment.

Chapter Notes

Sorry this chapter took so long! This is very detailed and school started, this also went through actual editing on my part along with a friend of mine.

Warning for mutilation, torture, gaslighting, and serious mental abuse.

Will may get out of character but I don't exactly know. Have fun with the trauma!

But that is merely a distraction, causing Tyler's eyes to flash with that instinctual fear... the recognition of a predator. That pity is gone in that moment, replaced with a killer calm. Will's eyes go dark as his mind exits to allow for what he's about to do.

This isn't the man we know.

He swoops down onto the younger man, grappling him into a chokehold. Will listens to the gasping and gagging, futile struggling in his arms... then he goes limp. After a few beats he lets him go, letting him fall to the floor like a sack of potatoes.

Will sighs heavily and stares at him, the predicament they're in. He could make it easier on himself and call the police, but then again, the man before him has proved himself tenacious and unforgiving. He has to rectify that... he has to teach him, forgive him.

He considers the man before him and hoists him up on his shoulder, carrying him out of the kitchen. There is so much that can be done. This isn't a simple matter so it can't be dealt with simply.

The younger man needs to know what he's done, and just how deeply his actions can effect him. He was rash, impulsive. They could have worked something out. Now he has to teach him, his mouth is what got him into this trouble. At least part of it...

The lip ring.

Will drops him into the chair and walks off to his bedroom. He opens up his closet and looks down in a box, pulling out six sturdy belts. He pulls on each one, testing the give... Once he is satisfied he goes back to the basement with his student, at least for tonight.

He tightens a belt around each extremity and pulls tight. Then one around the waist, just tight enough it hurts to breathe. Last comes the head. Keeping him at an angle he pulls a belt tight, no give at all. He doesn't want to mess this up.

Will gathers the things he needs from around the house and in his shed. An exacto knife from a drawer, some twine and a blowtorch from the shed, a box of Q-tips and rubber gloves from the bathroom, salt and lemon from the kitchen. While he's in the kitchen he glances down at the floor, seeing the younger man's knife on the floor.

That can definitely be useful.

Will picks it up and washes it off quickly before going back, setting the needed supplies upon a table beside the chair. He hums a soft tune to himself as he puts on a pair of rubber gloves before he hears a dazed groan from the man beside him.

"You're awake. Sorry but I didn't catch your name during our encounter." Will said easily, turning to the man before him. He searches the young man's face, dazed, confused, tense... no true fear yet.

"It's Tyler." He slurs out, tugging experimentally at the belts. No give. Then his mind starts to come back to him, the panic sets in.

"Alright Tyler, seems we have an issue to sort out. Now, I'm not mad. I just think this could've been handled better. Now, if you didn't come into my home I wouldn't have to teach you this lesson." Will is sitting in front of him, making himself known in his space.

"You're insane." Tyler barks out, just barely jerking in his seat to glare at him. That will soon pass. He will thank him by the end of this.

"I prefer... eccentric." Will replies with a soft grin, pushing his hair back into that precious beanie of his. The other flinched away from the touch. "Now, here's how I am going to teach the lesson. Through discipline, now it will hurt. It will hurt a lot. But you'll come out of this for the better."

Tyler trembles at the sickeningly sweet care given to him, confusion overtaking the fear of him. "What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to make sure you watch what you say, what you do. So you can avoid something like this happening again." He replies, wrapping twine around each side of his lip ring tightly. Will makes sure each side is secure and tight before wrapping the twine around his hand.

Will gives the twine a soft tug, listening to him whimper in fear. He smirks and rotates his body with the pull.

SSSLLLLIP

The sound of ripping skin fills his ears, blood pouring into his mouth beautifully. He dangles the lip ring before Tyler's eyes on the twine and sets it aside.

Tyler cries out and bitter tears crawl down his face. He gags on his blood and struggles in his bindings, trying to cough it up. He feels the blood sliding down his throat, not able to truly swallow it down.

When he starts shaking and gasping, the older man unstraps his head. He falls forward and coughs violently. His blood splatters to the floor, his breath stuttering in his throat. It spreads across the floor, leaving him dry heaving and staring in horror.

"This is what happens when you don't watch your actions. This is a lesson in being more... considerate of what you choose to do. This isn't a punishment, remember that. This is just making sure you don't let this happen again." Will says patiently, picking up the exacto knife and inspecting it.

The other is whimpering and staring at his own blood in shock before flickering his eyes to him. He had no words in the wake of the pain.

"I want the best for you, I want you to grow. For you to be happy." Will rubs his back comfortingly, bringing him back to the present with a kind touch. "I don't want something like this to ruin a potential friendship, okay?"

Tyler nods dumbly and flinches from the touch, not knowing his plans. Those next few minutes pass by in a haze of confusion and... comfort almost.

Then Will grabs his head and guides it back into the strap, holding him down tight as he straps him down. "Now, we truly begin the lesson for you tonight." He grabs the exacto knife and spins it in his hand; getting a tight hold of his lip and spreading his lip with the other.

From the tear that the lip ring left, he starts cutting downwards.

RRRRIIIIPP

Will pulls the skin apart as he cuts downwards, a pinpoint focus on the strip of skin. He feels the skin slowly rip like the seas, flowing between his fingers. The cries and screams fill his ears like a symphony. "This is all because of your decision to come into my home and... I think you were trying to kill me. I am alright with the coming into my house, I'm even alright with you being angry. That's understandable. But, what you aimed for was a permanent solution to a temporary problem. If we talked about this, we could've come to a solution where we both won." As Will spoke, he cut slowly down to his chin. Spread... cut... peel. He watches the tears fill his eyes with an oh so kind smile. Then the first cut was done.

He gets the blow torch and heats up Tyler's own knife. The smell of burning meat fills the air when he cauterizes the wound, the hiss of pain accompanies it like a duet.

Will unstraps his head and let's it fall forward.

Tyler coughs and sputters once more, shaking and whimpering. "You're doing well so far, you're present. Barely even shaking as I teach... Do you know what this mark is for?" Will asks kindly, curious. When Tyler shakes his head numbly, he tsks disapprovingly. "Seems I haven't explained myself well enough. I want you to understand that this," he gestures around, "is for a reason. That you need to consider your actions, and how they effect other people. Watch what you say, this cut will make sure of it."

Tyler cries bitterly and he wipes his tears away with those bloodstained gloves. "It's alright Tyler, you're doing great. You're learning. I know it hurts but you'll come out better for it, okay?" It all feels tacky against his skin, but he nods since he doesn't want to piss him off anymore.

"Good. Now I need you to lay your head back for me, I don't want to yank it back again. No need to hurt you through this." Will sets his head back and straps him down tightly. He twists the exacto knife in his hand, a show of what's next.

He grabs and spreads his lip once more, pulling the knife up slowly from the end of his last cut like splitting the seams of a hem. Focused, the noise echoing through the room.

RRRRRIIIIIP

"I hope this doesn't cause anymore tension between us, we can be friends after this. This is me forgiving you and through my forgiveness... I hope this will help you let go of all those grudges against me." Will addressed him with that calm tone, as if this were a regular occurrence. That pinpoint focus spread as his fingers did, that pain radiating down his body... up his spine like an electric shock to the brain. Tyler cries out as it travels, but not as bad as the first. His mind is trying to shut it out. Tears brim in his eyes and fall down his cheeks. The second cut is done, he burns each side of the cut with a quick flip of a hot knife.

Will unstraps his head, letting him cough up the blood and take a full breath.

"There now, we're almost done. We're taking our second break..." Will looks into his glazed eyes, taking in his condition with a clinical eye and a caring smile. As Tyler lets himself fall out of consciousness the other presses a needle into his neck, jolting him out of his drifting.

"I'm sorry Tyler, I can't let you sleep yet. Our lesson isn't over. You have to be awake for me to get my point across, or we'll have to start over... and I don't think you'd want that. Would you?" Will croons, brushing the hair back into the beanie.

Tyler shakes his head mutely, still staring at the floor with the detachment of a ferris wheel tumbling into the sea.

"Good, so focus on me. Stay awake and we'll be done soon, just one more cut. You're doing well, not even screaming anymore. I'm so proud of you." Will rubs his back gently, blood sticking to him like melted taffy.

Tyler breathes deeply as he shakes from the touch, cruelty and comfort blend in his mind. He can see the mercy Will is offering through his gentleness... just make it through this and it'll be over. The cruelty will set him free, make him better. He doesn't fight back as Will straps his head back once more.

"Now, have you ever heard of... salt in a wound?" Will asks with a hinting edge to his voice, tracing his bottom lip with his thumb as Tyler jolts with a shock of fear once more. He grins at him playfully as he grabs some salt and lemon, putting it against him in turn. They both can practically hear the burn of it as the younger of them tries to struggle away from it. "This will help prevent infection, though it does hurt. I don't exactly know where my antibacterial spray is. So this'll work in a pinch." Will clarifies, pulling away to put them down on the table beside them.

He picks up the exacto knife and starts cutting from the chin with a steady hand, though he does nick his gums and teeth occasionally. No one can be perfect after all, even in the best conditions. The blood pours around his fingers and down into Tyler's mouth. It burns as it settles in this throat, clogging it as he tries to breathe around it. The fear is setting in again before he looks into Will's calm blue eyes. Steady, slow... like an undisturbed lake.

And finally, his lip is split and Will burns each side. The lesson is over.

Will unstraps his head and helps him expel the blood from his throat, hitting his back. The other coughs violently and spits up the blood, eyes watering from the pain of it. He prays to a God he doesn't believe in just to get this to stop, the searing burn in his throat... the sharp sting and pull of his lip. This is his lesson and he'll take it for what it is, something it help him along... he did make a rash decision after all, what would've happened after he did kill him anyway?

"One last thing before I can count our lesson over, okay?" Will says compassionately, cupping his cheek and lifting his head to look him in the eye. Once he sees the recognition in the boy's eyes he smiled kindly. "Say I'm sorry."

Tyler shakes slightly and braces himself for the pain, but he has to do this. It comes out garbled and pained, lip scraping against his teeth as he tries to move it in those words.

"I'm sorry, couldn't understand that. Try again Tyler, you can do it." Will encourages, smiling at him still.

He tries again, pain shooting up and down his spine. This time it comes out almost understandable, his tears running down his cheeks unrestrained. "Em... theroy."

"You're getting closer, try one more time." Will held onto his shoulder reassuringly, looking over him with an unnatural focus, as if looking through him. Tyler suppresses a sob and tries once more. "Em thorry." He can't help but let a warm feeling wash over him when Will smiles genuinely at his attempt.

"Good job, our lesson is done. You did so well, staying with me the whole time and taking it with as much grace as you could." Will praises, putting the exacto knife away, the blood on

his gloves sticking to it. He cups his face gently for a moment. "Now I'll give you a choice, you can leave now but you cannot contact anyone, no police, no hospital, nothing... you cannot tell anyone about this, which means you cannot get this sewn. Now personally I think this actually looks nice, gives you face character." He pulls away and stands opposite him. "Or, you can let me sew up your lip... I've taken a couple of classes so I think it'll be decent." Will gives him this choice, this mercy of letting him go without pain but living unhealed... or going back under his hand to fix what he's done. He feels that warmth spreading through his chest.

"Thewing." Tyler responds as best he can, looking to him and preying he understands. Will nods slowly as he comprehends his speech. He did do this to him after all, he will make sure his lesson sticks in his head as a memory he can look back on.

"Okay, so you agree to me stitching you up. Admirable choice Tyler, not a lot of people would choose it." Will gives him a proud smile and gently smooths his hair back. "Now I leave another choice to you, I have no local anesthesia but I do have alcohol. We can do without and do this stone cold sober, it'll hurt like a bitch though. Or, we can have a drink together to numb the pain." He's offering him a release, a kindness foreign to Tyler after an experience like this. It's like he... like he cares.

Tyler takes a moment to consider his options, he didn't know how well the other could hold his liquor or how well he could even sew for that matter. But to reject that release would feel like a death sentence. He has to take it.

"Drink..." Tyler responds cautiously, relaxing minutely as Will smiles at him. Seems he made the right choice.

"I'll be right back Tyler, stay right there." He says as he walks off, up the stairs and to the lit doorway. He goes to the kitchen and picks a good whiskey, Southern Comfort, filling a small bucket with ice and setting it inside, he gets two low ball crystal glasses.

He soon goes back down the stairs carefully, setting down the bucket beside them and pulling up a chair to face him. "I'll untie one of your hands now, okay?" He says softly, once the other nods he tugs the belt off of his right hand.

Will puts some ice in each glass and fills it with three fingers of whiskey, giving him one and sipping at the other.

Tyler lifts his drink to his lips and tries to sip at it, but some drops into the wound. He gasps and coughs before swallowing his drink, shaking.

"Oh sorry, I should've told you how to drink. Mind the scratch." Will says with a playful smirk, gesturing to his own lip. "You have to tilt your head back, make sure it goes behind your teeth."

"Sorry, thank you." The other says to the best of his ability, evening out his breathing from that little scare. Will gives him a grin and nods.

"You're welcome, give it a shot. It's alright if you don't get it at first. I won't judge." Will says after another sip of whiskey, crossing his legs and resting his elbow on his knee.

Tyler takes a deep breath and tilts his head back before slowly taking a sip of whiskey. He feels cold blood running down his throat as he swallows in fear, he smells copper filling the air and the burn of pain. He is shaking as he lowers his head once more.

"Did it right on your first try, nicely done." Will praises with a smile as he swirls his whiskey in the glass, as if he knew exactly how he felt and what he was doing. It set his teeth on edge like he was staring down a cougar in a cage.

The younger man gives him an approximation of a smile, a twitch of his cheek. His mind is still hazy as to why he's doing this, but he feels a kind connection between the two of them, something he can rely on. And that's all he needs for now.

As time went on and they had a couple drinks together, Tyler forgot more and more about his pain until,

"Think you've had enough to continue?" Will asks kindly, setting down his glass and taking his out of his hand to put it beside his own. He looks at him expectantly, the flex of rubber gloves ringing through the room.

The younger man nods hesitantly and the other smiles. He hums softly as he sterilizes a needle and thread, testing with a quick tug to see if it will stay. "Can you lay your head back?" Will asks with a little hum.

Tyler does so with no hesitation as Will straps his hand back down. "I need to strap your head down so you don't move while I'm doing this." He warns before doing so, "That good? Tight enough?"

He tests it with a quick jerk of his head. No give. "Good." He replies, watching as he came closer and holding up the needle in the light. No fear washed over him now.

"Now, let's begin." Will presses the needle into the flesh near his chin and starts making the first seam, throughout this process Will is nothing if not kind. At each step of the way, he asks if everything is alright, if he needs to take a break or even if he needs more whiskey.

The perfect gentleman.

Tyler comes out of it for the better, happy and tired. Loose even though he is understandably sore. The older man finally takes off those bloody gloves and puts it with the rest of his tools. "I am curious Tyler, did you come in your own car?" He asks as he undoes the strap on his head.

He nods slowly, flexing his fingers to get some feeling into them once more.

"Alright, so we have a choice. You can leave now, and I follow you home so I can make sure you don't do anything stupid. Or, you stay the night, we drink some more together and we get

you home in the morning. Problem is, you're still in some pain right now and you're drunk right now... but it is your choice." Will explains, looking Tyler in the face. Once again he is faced with that mercy, that kindness of letting him choose how and when he goes. He can leave now as friends, or in the morning when his head is clear with a proper goodbye.

A true escape either way. Almost too good to be true.

Lethe

Chapter Summary

Will encounters our new killer.

Chapter Notes

I am so sorry this update took so long! Band took up so much of my time but now that band season is over I can (probably) update more often. I hope you enjoy this chapter at least, have fun!

The drive took forever and a day to get to their destination. He could barely see the car in front of him from the midnight ink just before the rising sun, it was as if he were trying to escape. But he knows better. He better, or the lesson wasn't taught correctly... and he may need a refresher. And he would make sure it stuck.

They stopped in front of a darkened apartment building, Tyler silently getting out of the car with hesitant feet. He walked to the door and made the mistake of looking back.

Will smiled and waved from his car, watching the Windigo follow him up the stairs to his apartment. Taking the address, he left him to his own devices. It'll do for now, a small piece of insurance.

He comes to with a splitting headache and bare feet. The scent of meat wafts into his mind and makes him look to the stove... when did he start cooking? How long has it been? What time is it? How much has he lost? What day is it?

Will turns off the burners as he starts to panic, harsh breathing burning his lungs. He holds onto the counter top... why is it chipped? He feels across it and finds the piece on the floor. Maybe he hit his head last night... he's missing a whiskey glass. Odd.

He takes another deep breath and sighs it out before going to survey the house. Room after room he checks, coming up with nothing out of the ordinary until he reaches the basement.

The moment he opens the door he is hit by the scent of cleaning products, floored by it. Will hangs onto the railing and presses on downstairs, both dreading and anticipating what he may see. *Why would I use so much floor cleaner? Did something happen down here last night that I don't remember?*

The shot of copper to his nose cuts through the haze of bleach, making him feel nauseous. Dispite the pristine condition of the room, he knows that smell anywhere.

Blood.

Something happened here. The only evidence left was the smell, nothing else was out of place except for a bucket of water with a bottle of Southern Comfort inside. Everything else seemed fine.

Will breathes out and feels over his pockets. He sticks his hands into his front pockets and pulls out a paper, all it has is a name and an address. Someone named Tyler... no. Not going to pursue that. Too much that can go wrong. If he just forgets about it, everything can be back to normal... well as normal as it can get.

He grabs the bucket, carrying it up the stairs and pretends the sloshing of the contents is the waves of the ocean. The burn of the floor cleaner transforms into the sting of a sea breeze, the wood of the stairs into the deck of a boat.

Will takes out the bottle and takes a long look at the label. The soak overnight did it no favors, peeling at the edges as he sets it upon its shelf with the others.

Dumping out the contents of the bucket, he realized that his pack was already fed and taken out for a run. When did he do that? How much time has he lost? Will's stomach growls in irritation at him ignoring it for so long.

Will sighs and goes back to the kitchen, meat still waiting to be cooked fully... what animal did that even come from? It doesn't matter. It's food. *I'm not dealing with this shit today.*

As Will is eating, his phone rings out in the scuffling silence of the house. "What." He snaps into the phone, knowing Jack is here to drag him back again.

"Got a new case for you to look at." Jack replies, unfazed by his irritation.

"I still need time to recover." Will goes to take another bite of his food, anger creeping up his throat.

"He sewed two people together and cut their hearts out. We need your help." Jack insists, the sounds of a crime scene in the background of the call. Without another word, he send the address over text and hangs up.

Will huffs, finishing his food before getting up to go to his car.

The journey passes in a blur, music passing muffledly through the air. He can't just bring himself to fully focus, the smell of blood and bleach of this morning luring him back into the river. But he keeps his head above that sinking feeling.

"You made it. Thought you wouldn't show up." Jack comes up to Will, hands in his pockets.

"Did I really have a choice?" Will gets out of the car and lifts his head, deadpan.

Jack gives him a look of disapproval before leading him to the bodies in the bedroom. Their mangled forms hanging onto each other in a permanent embrace of seams and blood. An empty cavity of where each heart should be looked into the void of their souls, their faces twisted in agony in such a way they barely look human anymore... like a humuculi sewn from pieces of another.

Will feels himself gag a little at this, just at the sheer amount of feeling put into this, no showing off, no regard for fame just... yearning and loneliness. He feels uncomfortable how much he can relate with that lack of connection but he doesn't allow himself to think about it too much as he closes his eyes and let's the pendulum swing in front of his eyes.

The blood recedes from the bedsheets first and the threads slowly cut at each seam, untangling the lovers from their hold with each snip. Their expressions shift from agony to the fondness of a fawn as the holes in their chest seal their hearts away from each other. And they breathe again.

"I've been watching these two for awhile, so sweet so... connected. I'll make sure they're connected forever." Will gets two syringes ready and goes to the sleeping couple, injecting each in turn without a sound to make sure they stay asleep.

"I will never be like them." He gets out a needle and thread and starts to sew together every point of contact, slow and methodical in his movements. By the time he is done, they start to wake up in pain as they try to separate.

"I need to finish quickly, before they pull the seams of their bond." Will now starts to carve into them, right into the heart of their being then the screaming... stops. Fading out as if never there in the first place.

He slowly opens his eyes, taking in his surroundings. The blood, the sheer terror... the emotional turmoil covering the whole room like a suffocating blanket. And it made his blood boil with how much he related to him. Will walked over to Jack, sadness hanging about him like a cloak.

"Anything?" Jack asks, looking to him expectantly as techs took to the crime scene once more.

"This was premeditated, watched them, knew their habits... how much they loved each other. He wants to preserve that, no matter what. He has trouble making connections with anyone... he's alone." Will answers, his voice fading towards the end of it as his eyes focus to the middle distance.

"We need something more distinct than that." Jack looks at him calmly, hands in his pockets.

"Then maybe rely on physical evidence. This is the first kill I've seen, I need to get to know him." Will meets his eyes for moment. "Now if you'll excuse me, I have an appointment." He leaves without another word to his car, tuning out Jack calling after him.

He slumps into his seat with a heavy sigh, rubbing a hand down his face before taking two aspirins. "This is going to be a long day." Then he starts the car, getting out of the lot and into

the street.

Will turns the radio up loud enough to drown out his thoughts, bass thrumming through his body and right to his heart. It eases the anger somewhat, and the thought of Hannibal eases it further as he pushes the thoughts of blood from his mind. His mind turns to the water, the music being replaced with the calm chaos of a river.

There's a knocking on his window. "Will? Would you like to come in?" Hannibal asks through the glass, looking on with mild concern at the still man before him.

Will startles and looks at him, spell broken and the waves rush away. He nods slowly, eyes wide as Hannibal opens the door for him to let him out, helping in this subtle way.

He follows his lead inside, hands in his pockets as he considers his words for this session once more. Should he address what happened this morning... he doesn't want to worry him. Wait, he's his therapist. He needs to know.

"So, do you have anything that you would like to start with today?" Hannibal takes Will's coat easily and hangs it on the coat rack, leading him further into the room as if he was on a leash.

Will comes in further and starts his rounds around the room, up the ladder as he speaks. "I lost a lot of time this morning, I was in the middle of cooking when I came back and..." He stops to lean against the railing and sighs heavily. "Something was different, I felt it."

"What did you find different Will?" Hannibal prompted, watching him from his perch in the chair like an owl watches a mouse, waiting to pounce.

I found a smell of bleach and blood on my floor following me like a ghost. I found that I was missing things, like my whiskey glass and my memory. "Just a feeling, it all felt off like... someone else was there for awhile. I lost a whiskey glass and I found a bottle in a bucket in the basement." Will says hesitantly, words choked out of his suddenly dry throat as he shakes.

"What do you think happened?" Hannibal asks, curious. He stands to look at Will properly and slowly walks into his field of vision.

"I... I don't know. I'm not sure if I want to." He pushes away from the railing and paces again, his mind running with possibilities. "What... what if I hurt someone Dr. Lecter?" He comes down, feet firmly on the ground.

"I'm sure that you didn't W-" He tries to assure him kindly.

"How do you know? I barely know myself now so how can you know what I'll do?" Will cuts in, eyes snapping to him with the fear and rage of a caged animal.

"Because I'm your friend." He soothes, walking closer to the jittery man before him. Slow and steady so as to not startle him.

"I thought you were my therapist." He says bitterly, as though he were upset by that. *Why would I be upset that he's just my therapist?*

"We're just having conversations Will. Nothing is officially on the record, we have no doctor-patient relationship." Hannibal states calmly, averting his eyes first in this stand off as if to give the other power in this exchange.

Will is stunned by this, tension easing from his shoulders. A deep breath in and out, and he is back to himself. "Something else happened today. Jack, he showed me another crime scene." He changes the subject easily to something he may be able to discuss.

Hannibal nodded for him to continue, allowing him the change as he looks to him once more. Like nothing ever happened. *What I wouldn't give for him to have him ruffled for more than a second.*

"It was... he sewed them together and ripped out their hearts in some sick thought that this will keep them together." He spit out with a shudder, their distance from each other closing even more like magnets.

"Who were they to each other?" Hannibal asks, not moving an inch so Will doesn't notice their dance. Well, his own anyway.

"They were partners, young and in love. Had something he couldn't have." Will answers, his footsteps bringing him ever closer to his psychiatrist.

"Why couldn't he have it?" He eyes him up and down slowly, assessing him for a moment. He watches his stride change, his mannerisms... even the cadence of his voice. He could see the loneliness, the slumped posture, and the moments of meekness in his voice as though afraid of breaking silence.

"He is afraid, he can't reach out to anyone. He doesn't know how." He is so close now, raising his head to look him in the face. He either doesn't notice or doesn't care.

"Do you see a part of yourself within him, Will?" Hannibal ventures and watches the other freeze with the eyes of a predator, Will's mind his prey.

That's when Will stepped away, an unconsious choice. "... I do. I see parts of me in everyone Dr. Lecter." A non-answer at best, a diversion like dangling meat for a dog. Hannibal jumps for it.

"But you relate to him." Hannibal states, though it should be a question, he feels compelled to answer either way.

Will gives a mute nod this time, words stolen from his lips as he stares at the other for a beat. "Do you feel lonely Dr. Lecter, I mean, with the life you live you have a lot of people but when I see you you look... lonely."

Hannibal pauses at this, rolling his words in his mouth carefully. "Not so much as lonely as unfulfilled." He says haltingly.

"You want to be seen, understood. You don't find that with your friends." Will says, stepping closer. Like a little kid to an injured bird.

"Do you see me?" He asks, curious of what the profiler knows.

"I will." He answers, sure as the sun will rise in the east as he takes a step to him, almost no space between them. "I will."

Oedipus

Chapter Summary

The capture of our new killer, after an easy mistake.

Chapter Notes

I am so sorry that I haven't updated so long, it was so hard to write this chapter. It went through so many drafts and it just didn't cooperate. Now, I finally got it. I hope you enjoy!

Sadie sighs heavily as she finally parks in the school lot, seeing Lucas sitting on the curb of the sidewalk with his hand supporting his head on his knee. *I didn't think I would be this late*, *it's only fifteen minutes after all*.

Lucas gets up from where he sat, tossing his bag into the back seat before getting in passenger side silently, turning up the music and staring straight ahead. As he relaxes into the seat, he can feel her eyes on him before she drove out of the lot.

She bops her head to the music, humming as she drives to their usual fast food place they go to after every long day for the both of them. After she orders what they usually get, Lucas holding it in his lap like something precious before taking the one nugget tax. "So how was your day Lu?" She asks, glancing over at him as she pulls out of the drive thru.

"Fine, tiring until I got to after school. That was fun." He says through a mouthful of nugget, covering his mouth at least before swallowing. "How was yours ma?" He looks over at her, the tense line of her shoulders not quite eased away even with him being open.

"Awful, remember that lunch meeting I told you that was going to happen today?" She says, when he hums she continues. "Well, it was supposed to last an hour and a half at most, guess how long it went on? Four hours of sitting in a bistro and bickering over what should be changed at the clinic. And I couldn't even eat because it would be rude since I was standing up front and talking most of the time."

"You know, if you all communicated better within the company it might not have been so long." Lucas suggests, eating a fry from the bag after gesturing with it.

"How are we supposed to communicate when we're constantly swamped. We're the only vets in town." She sighs out, hands tight around the wheel.

"Maybe hang out more? Talk outside of moments you have to?" Lucas looks down into the bag, avoiding her gaze when he felt it. *Like how we used to, before everyone started dropping like flies?* He fidgets with the edge of the bag.

Sadie feels the shift in the air between them, this conversation was less about work and more about them... how they used to be, before she took this job, before his dad left them for his secretary. A younger, more naive woman that fell head over heels for a man that couldn't care less about his family. "Maybe we can organize something, talk about it at work. Some off days to be with family more so we're all a little less on edge." She gentles her voice, hands easing against the wheel.

"I found this cool place we can go to if you get some days off, you like puzzles still right?" Lucas perks up hearing that, taking his chance on it, locking onto her. He sees her nod and goes on. "Well I found this escape ro-" The phone rings loudly through the car, connected to the speakers.

"I'm sorry Lu, I have to take this." Sadie sighs out as she touches the screen to answer. "Hello?"

The man over the lines voice rings over the speakers. "Ms. Parker, there's some paperwork you have to finish tonight. Can you come to the office?" He asks tentatively, voice wavering with nerves.

"Yeah, yeah. Just give me a minute Turner, I was going to drop Lucas off at home." She sighs out heavily, tense lines creeping into her again.

"It'll only take a minute once you get here, he can just stay inside." There is the sound of papers being organized in the background. "I'll see you soon." He says, hanging up and not leaving her room to argue.

"Sorry, what were you saying Lu?" She looks to Lucas, taking a u-turn easily and tapping on her wheel.

"Nevermind." Lucas mutters as he pulls his hood up, looking out a window and turning up the music to signal the end of the conversation.

Sadie feels her heart sink in her chest, pain settling into its place. That moment she thought she finally connected with Lucas after all that's happened with work and school. She knows he knows that she's doing her best for him, but that doesn't stop him from distancing himself. Work really doesn't help, constantly pulling her away from him. She just lost the most important moment she's had in years.

By the time they get there, the silence between them is oppressive as she puts the car in park. "Lucas, I'm sorry I don't know w-"

"You do know what you did, you constantly put work before me. Everytime I have something I want to do or a show I'm in, you promise to be there. Guess what, you never are! And I'm tired of pretending I'm okay with it, you weren't like this when dad was still here!" He burst

out, ripping his hood off as he looks at her. During this, they didn't even notice the back door opening. By the time they even registered someone was there, their world went black.

Will feels vomit rise up in his mouth and swallows it back, opening his eyes. He meets the pairs eyes, cold and black in death, he doesn't know if it's better or worse than their faces being frozen in fear. "Check the clinic's phone records, might give us a name." He says shortly as he sits down at the edge of the scene.

Jack thinks better than asking him what he saw in that scene, silently signaling officers to do just that. He gets a shock blanket to drape over his back, tucking it around his shoulders. "Will you be okay to look through files?" He asks instead and is met with a numb nod. "Can you do it now?" Yet another nod as Will gets up from where he sits, walking inside with him. He avoids the eyes of the sewn together pair, blood pooling over their hands.

Will strides into the clinic silently, going to listen to recordings as his stomach churns. It took them hours to get through all the recordings from the day before before getting to the end of it, catching the name Turner. "Get me employment records of veterinarians." He says to an officer, who quickly goes to retrieve records from a filing cabinet.

Jack looks at Will questioningly. "Who do you think it is?" He asks as Will turns off the recordings.

"All I know is his first or last name is Turner, he worked closely with Sadie, probably over her." He replies, turning off the recordings as he walks around the desk to take the files from an officer's hands. "Maybe she was his secretary, or accountant, something like that." He sets a file aside, opening it to read, barely reacting as the door was opened and familiar footsteps followed.

"Hello Will." Hannibal said, going around the desk to him to read over his shoulder, placing a hand on him.

"Hey Hannibal." He puts down another file on his side for him to look through with him, something to make him useful, which Hannibal takes up easily. "We're looking for a Turner, first or last name." He states, glancing at him over his shoulder, not shrugging off the touch, letting his hand slide off as he goes to read.

It is a surprisingly quick find, the seventh file between them reading Turner Hughes. He's a twenty five year old man, painfully alone on all accounts, living at 3924 Cliffside drive, a small apartment closeby. "We need to get going, now." Will says, pulling his jacket closer to himself as he walks out. "He'll be killing again soon." Leading investigators out and into their cars, Hannibal driving him to the tiny cage that held a large, disturbing monster.

By the time they get there, Will feels a shift in the air. He knows Turner knows they found him, he's waiting for their knock on the door, or their words... he's not going down without a fight. Turner will do something he won't live to regret.

Will gets out of the car, knowing he will have to play into it, there's no other way to do this. Hand on the holster, he knocked on the door of the apartment. "Mr. Hughes, can you open the door? We need to talk." Will states calmly to the wood between them, tightening his grip

against the fear gripping his chest. Turner may be a coward, but that means he'll act out since he's cornered.

"Give me a minute." There is the sound of locks clicking open with a shaking hand, clicking open and closed once or twice, three locks by the sound of it. By the time Turner opens the door, he sees Will facing him. He draws his gun to take his shot.

Turner could have made it too, but Will is faster. Time passes in slow motion he sees the flash of silver from a revolver, he clicks the safety off and draws his gun from the holster... shooting the man in front of him point blank in the chest. So, it was over before it began.

The sound of the man's body hitting the floor is deafening to Will, not helped by the loud gunshot near him. The second man he's killed in the line of duty. The second that fell that is justified in everyone's eyes. The second that didn't give him the same feeling as the first, numbing to an itch now...

Will collapses, face splattered in blood and his own tears. He hears the choking and gasping from the other man. "Guess someone finally got my heart." Turner sighs peacefully with a light laugh hiding pained breaths, a smile gracing his face before he takes his last breath.

He chokes on his own harsh breathing, holding his hand over his mouth, arm bracketing over his stomach to keep himself from vomiting. He barely feels the hands pulling him up and close to a solid body, words vibrating through his back that he couldn't quite grasp as his mind swims away from himself... away from this horrific scene. He's going to be gone for awhile.

Heresy

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal talk about morality.

Chapter Notes

I'm sorry this took so long, I lost passion for awhile since the person who fueled it left my life. So I had to take a hiatus to find myself, and I hope this makes up for it.

Will feels himself being sat down, slowly jostled on a car ride that he doesn't know when it will end. He hears violins and a vibrating bass of words, but he can't bring himself to listen to anything but that gunshot on repeat.

Will killed a man, but did it really kill that itch, that fire in his blood not cooled down by the icy river he finds his mind swimming in, trying idly to catch it. It's not as if it matters right now. He knows he's safe, recognizing the timbre of Hannibal's words. Will catches bits and pieces of his words of reassurance.

The voice inside his head is starting to sound just like Hannibal, his anchor, his paddle. Something he could hold onto when his own morality failed him, so how can he really know that it's Hannibal talking right now?

Will opens his eyes, he barely even noticed they were shut. He looks around, uncomprehending of the road in front of them, street signs just foreign symbols to him when he could spot them. "Where are we...?" Will slurs out, looking to the man beside him.

"We're on the way to my home. I don't think you should be on your own tonight." Hannibal replies, glancing over to check on him.

"But my dogs-" Will starts, sitting up in his seat, even in his hazy state ready for an argument.

"Will be fine. They have been fed on their regular schedule, it's you I'm more worried about." Hannibal cuts in, not taking his eyes off the road. Normally he wouldn't do that but maybe he doesn't want to cause Will any undue worry after what he just did. "How are you feeling?"

Will stares out at the road, the inky blackness surrounding the light. So many unknown variables lingered outside its reach, in this state he could imagine every bit of it, as if it were his own mind, his fortress. He didn't know if he was the light or the darkness that lurked at its edges, ready to take over the moment it was turned off. "I feel like it wasn't enough."

"The punishment you delivered? Is death not enough to pay for his crimes?" Hannibal asks as he turns down the music, making it complete background noise thrumming under Will's fingertips.

"Yes, just..." Will sighs heavily and runs a hand through his hair. How does he explain this itch to such a man, one who understands him to the basest level, yet does not flinch? How do you explain to someone something like this?

"It didn't feel like enough for you." At Will's nod, Hannibal continues, "Tell me Will, what did it feel like killing Turner compared to Thomas?"

"It felt like that wasn't the way Turner was supposed to die for what he did." Will takes a deep breath, staring resolutely forward.

"Hence the not enough... tell me Will, how was he supposed to die in your eyes?" Hannibal asks, knowing they are nearly at his home.

"How do you think he was supposed to die Dr. Lecter?" Will retorts, turning to look at him. It feels like pressing an advantage, to look at him without being seen without risk involved on Hannibal's side.

"Paralyzed and in fear as his victims did." Hannibal says, turning onto another road, seems he understands Will better than he thought.

Will nods slowly, realizing over all their appointments he doesn't have to consider his words as carefully. "He shouldn't have gotten the closure he did, he should've died screaming. Actually paid for what he did, he killed a child Dr. Lecter." An edge sneaks into his words, gripping onto his own knees for some sense of stability. He jerks a bit from the stop in front of the house, he practically forgot where they were.

"Is killing a child more reprehensible to you than an adult?" Hannibal asks, turning the key in the ignition and pulling it out. "Fundementally it is the same, the taking of a life."

"But it really isn't, is it? An adult has lived more life, done more things but a kid... they're just starting out, done nothing to deserve any ill treatment." Will says, opening the door of the car. He just wants to be in a more familiar space.

"Tell me Will, is the reason you view the treatment of children in such a way because of your own childhood?" Hannibal replies, getting out with him to go inside.

Will is silently contemplating that as they walk inside, Hannibal helping him with his coat before he responds. "Maybe, I don't why I think what I do. Do you?"

Hannibal hangs their coats, smoothing them out on their hooks. "Sometimes I do. But when it comes to things such as morality, I just know that I think they are right. What do we base our morality on besides what our guardians teach us alongside society. But, in both our cases, we were mostly detached from both. So, where does our morality come from but an inborn sense of right and wrong?" He leads them to his study, opening the door for Will.

Will steps in, looking around the room as if checking if its changed since last time he's seen it. "People aren't born knowing what's right and wrong, we are born following what feels good. It just so happens what feels good to us is the right thing to do in society's eyes."

"Is killing a man who committed atrocities right, or does it just feel good?" Hannibal asks, going to a cabinet as he pulls out red wine and two glasses.

"Why can't it be both?" Will retorts, leaning against the back of an armchair, watching him like a curious wolf.

Hannibal sets the glasses down on his desk, pouring wine into both. He watches the glasses close as he does. "I did not say that. We were made in God's image, and He kills all the time. I'm sure it feels good to Him too." He walks over to him and hands him a glass.

Will sips the wine with no preamble, as if he were drinking whiskey. "Depends on who you ask on that, some people say we evolved like this."

Hannibal hums and sips his own wine, walking over to his seat. "In many eyes, God is terrific. He dropped a church roof on 42 of his worshipers last night in Texas, while they sang a hymn."

"Did He feel good about that?" Will turns to look at from his almost perch on his seat.

"He felt powerful, as you did killing Thomas Jackson." Hannibal crosses his legs, setting his wine aside.

"I killed him in self defense." Will feels the need to say that, as if to justify it, though he knows he doesn't need to in front of Hannibal. He turns fully and sits across from him. "It was him or me."

"I know Will, no need to justify killing such a man, at least to me. Do you feel the need to do so to yourself?" Hannibal leans forward as he speaks, looking Will right in the eyes to assess him.

"Wouldn't you? If you stabbed one man and shot another, how would you feel?" Will takes another drink of his wine, "Would your mind be as sound as it is now?"

"No, but I would be able to accept it, as I have with other troubling things that have happened in my life." Hannibal takes Will in, his posture as it mimics his own, as if he controlled his every move. He knows that even like this they're on equal footing, both in a some kind of slow dance towards the darkness, where madness waits for them.

"What keeps the great Dr. Lecter up at night I wonder..." Will asks, looking over his wine glass at him. An open invitation to share with him more than what Will pried from him to feel better about saying something about himself. Quid pro quo.

"Regrets, as it would with any man. I have lived a long life, as have you even for your younger age." At that comment, Will snorts and the other tilts his head.

"Sorry, forgot you had your own snark to deflect. I won't ask about them." Will replies, gesturing with his glass.

Hannibal nods and the rest of the time they spent in the study passed in companionable silence until Will is yawning. "I'll show you to the guest room." He stands and offers him his hand, feeling the warmth of Will's hand when he takes it. That warmth was only matched by the warmth gracing his cheeks that he has gained over the course of this visit.

He leads him him upstairs, his mind dwelling on how welcoming Will is of his touch. How their hands fit together like the ruffled feathers of a canary before they slip into place. Or in their case, their hands separate as Hannibal opens the door for him. "This should be good for tonight, correct?" Hannibal asks, watching Will walk in. Will nods, turning on the light. Hannibal can see how tired he is in the way he barely looks around before toeing off his shoes and flops onto the bed. "Sweet dreams Will." Hannibal says quietly, shutting the door with a soft click.

And that's the first time he sleeps well for weeks.

Eidyllion

Chapter Summary

A domestic moment between Hannibal and Will.

Chapter Notes

Hi everyone! Sorry I haven't updated in so long, quarantine really got to me and up until recently I haven't been able to create much of anything. I haven't abandoned this, just progress is slow going because life happens and it's hard to deal with. Thank you for being so patient.

Water was slipping over him in gentle waves, cocooning him like silk. He felt the caress of velvet against his cheek and fingers long as the gaps of his memory linger down his chest. Will cannot bring himself to open his eyes, paralyzed under this attention. It feels... right, to be stuck under something that felt like it could impale him under claws and antlers. He knows the intimacy of this monster now, it doesn't mean him any harm, but that doesn't mean it can't break him with a single touch like porcelain. Like fine china one firm grip away from splintering further as if it were a broken bone.

Will took a deep breath and opened his eyes, coming face to face with the monster he brought with him from that dark place... the more he faces it the more he realizes, can he really consider it such a thing? It was more of a guardian, escorting him in and out of those places, a shield.

He couldn't move, could hardly breathe as the monster's fingers dragged up to his neck with the caution one would approach a cornered animal. When he felt the claw curl around his neck he accepted them, bearing his neck to the gentle weight and warning of his death.

Will gasps and sits up in bed, looking around and remembering the night before... the kill, the comfort afterwards, the catharsis. He didn't think he would sleep so well after all that, especially in Hannibal's home. The darkly painted walls and elegant decoration draped across the room makes him feel surrounded, held in by Hannibal's essence. He feels conflicted, one side of him tells him this is the den of a dangerous beast that hasn't found him yet and the other says... this is a home of a mere man, someone who can hold the weight of his sins in one palm and mold them into something exquisite.

Will gets out of bed and shuffles out the door. When he opens it he can hear Hannibal working in the kitchen, as he comes down the stairs he smells sausage cooking along with

some spices he can't quite name. "Morning Dr. Lecter." He says, the rumble of sleep not leaving his voice quite yet.

"Good morning Will. I trust that you have slept well." Hannibal glances over at him with a friendly smile, this scene draws half formed thoughts and fractured fantasies formed in lonely nights surrounded by his pack. Scenes of domesticity and that affection he knows Dr Lecter can provide.

"Better than I sleep at home... thank you." Will has his hands in his pockets, looking out the window and resolutely not looking at Hannibal again until his mind settles away from his imaginings.

"Of course, I strive to offer a sense of comfort." Hannibal plates the food he has cooked and walks to the dining room, setting them down at their places. He sits at the head of the table, getting enough of Will's attention that he sits on his left.

Will's face feels warm as he looks down at the plate. "So, what's in this?" He asks, looking at the omlette in front of him, desperate for a change of subject. As Hannibal explains it, he really doesn't listen to anything but the cadence of his voice and he knows Hannibal can tell even if he takes it in stride. "I'm glad I don't have class today, or else I would have to deal with Jack dragging me out of it again."

"I'm sure after the experience you've had he wouldn't do that. If anything he will have you have another psychological evaluation before he pulls you into the field again. It would help him sleep at night as he says." Hannibal looks down at his food and takes a bite.

"Please, he doesn't really care that much. He barely waited three days before putting me back in after you rubber stamped me." Will cuts the edge of his omlette and takes the bite, annoyed.

"I can stop him from taking you back into the field Will." His voice tapers like a sharp knife's edge, putting a dull ache in Will's chest. He knows Hannibal's care is as a friend, if he is being generous, though it is closer to his professional concern as a psychiatrist. It makes his head spin when someone is so concerned, almost affectionate, it doesn't help with his overactive imagination. All this domesticity and kindness is giving him ideas, and he can't help but feel guilty.

"You'll act as a buffer?" Will asks, idly sinking his fork into the omlette as he looks at Hannibal.

"Do you mind that thought?" Hannibal watches his reaction, seeing how open he is to him being a shield and someone he can hold onto. Someone he can rely on. Proposing the thought of actually being close as they have been in their time of knowing each other, actually addressing what's between them is unheard of.

"No, no. I like you as a buffer." Will takes another bite to keep from saying more, nerves tanging his movements. His anxiety fills the air like the sting of fresh citrus, clinging to the top of the mouth and lingering a touch too long like the wandering gaze of a stranger. "I like that you rattle Jack, makes me see where Alana got it from."

"It as in..?" Hannibal tilts his head and takes a bite of his food.

"That command of a room, how you've gained Jack's respect in a way he cares far too much to yell at you." He answers, eyes turned away as he thinks of that command. *How he talks during their conversations, his movements on the border of predator and prey, leaning wherever he needs it. Hannibal can probably do that because of the nature of his profession, comfort the weak willed or to look in the eyes of the narcissistic of the world. He can probably use that control in different ways...* Will shakes himself out of those thoughts, no good to dwell on that here.

"And I use it to my advantage." Hannibal takes a bite of his own omlette, smiling inwardly at the praise of his skill at dealing with the temperamental man.

"Do you use it to your advantage with me Dr. Lecter?" He asks curiously, his gaze cutting into the seams of the person suit but not quite pulling them out. He is merely trying to get a glimpse between the fabric this time, like a child on Christmas Eve.

"You would know if I did, I am sure of that." He reassures the other, watching as he chews the sausage in his mouth. His gazes focuses on his lips. Soft and shining as if made of the finest porcelain. As much as his eyes captivated him in their analysis, it could not hurt to admire the rest of him.

"I'm glad one of us is... I'm not sure of much anymore. You know, I barely remember the aftermath of me killing Mr. Hughes. It's just one big... blurr until we get here. A gun shot and then," Will aims his finger like a gun and makes a vague approximation of a gunshot sound, "I'm here. Sitting with you, discussing the morality of punishing the wicked... Hell I barely even remember that."

"It is common that in the wake of a traumatic event our minds try to blur them from us to recover. The moments before and after are lost where the trauma remains." Hannibal clasps his hands in front of him, leaning forward into Will's space ever so subtly. He can smell the sour citrus taste of his nerves in the air.

"I know, but it feels like there's more going on here than trauma. Maybe a tumor, or or or seizures? I was blacking out before this, this could be something really serious." Will gestures wildly, fork still in hand like a poorly thought weapon. This feels so familiar, but slanted. Not a fight this time, but the charge, the adrenaline running through his veins and the nerves... he feels like a teenager again.

"You have been through a lot of trauma as of late. It can make you forgetful as if you are in a fog. When you are stressed, it induces your fight or flight response. In your case, you do both; Your body fights while your mind flees. Tell me Will, where do you go?" Hannibal seems unfazed by his outburst, pushing through his defenses. Pressing through Will's bared teeth and raised haunches to soothe that frightened beast within that reflects so much of his own.

"You know where I go." He snaps, words clipped like roses and ringing through the air in their brief silence. He is building another fort as they speak.

"I would like to hear more about it, since circumstances have changed as of late." His voice covers him in a linen shroud, hiding his eyes from Hannibal's. Allow him to speak as only the dead could.

Will seems to settle slowly, allowing himself to actually think of his answer. To give Hannibal the description he wants. "I... I go to a river, I don't remember where it is, but I remember it feeling like home. Trees on each side, hidden away from the outside world. When my dad was sober... we'd go fishing in the closest river. Standing there, with water up to my knees." He looks back down at his food, scraping up a couple bites into his mouth.

"The only constant in your life was water. The flow of a river a direct guide into your subconscious. What do you think you will find there?" Hannibal watches Will's adam's apple bob as he swallows each bite.

"What do you think you'll find?" Will parrots back with a quick snap of his teeth. "I'm sorry, force of habit." He sighs out.

"It's perfectly alright, you're defensive of what your mind holds for fear of judgement. Even now with our friendship as it is, you still try to hide the inner workings you are truly ashamed of." He pays attention to his own food now that the atmosphere has settled as it has.

"And those I am not?" Will raises a brow, leaning back in his chair and raising his head.

"You bury them in a way that they are meant to be found, so you do not have to ask for the help you want. Hidden away on the banks of your mind as the sand is eaten away by the sea." Hannibal takes his last bite calmly and sets his fork down.

"What does this have to do with losing time and- and hallucinations Dr Lecter?" He feels himself dreading the answer but he cannot help but ask him to get his point. He swallows his own last bite and resists the urge to stare the other man down into submission.

"It has everything to do with it Will, you hide from the constant trauma you put yourself through with each scene, with each mind that invades you. It seems you cannot build forts fast enough to keep yourself from blurring at the edges, so your mind tries to make up for it. Making you lose the traumatic moments and sends it down a river you dare not follow, showing you horrendous sights to deter you from those dark places." Hannibal says, he is looking right through him and his gaze bores into his soul. Will can't help but squirm under his scrutiny.

"I'm not traumatized. I'm just... stressed. I'm saving lives, that's all that matters." The denial sounds weak even to his own ears.

"What about your life Will? You're my friend, I don't care about those other people's lives. Only yours." Hannibal's voice is so soft, like a caress of a mother wiping away a child's tears. It aches in Will's chest, thumps in time with his jackrabbit pulse and makes his mouth dry.

Too much, it's too much. "I... I need to get back home and feed my dogs." He says nervously, his eyes flickering away.

"I called Beverly this morning, she is taking care of it. I feel it best because of your condition you stay with me for today, just to make sure you're alright. Or are you using your dogs as an excuse because you feel exposed when you're here?" Hannibal raises a brow, catching Will's eye.

Caught out, even though I do find comfort there I... I just need to get out from under this microscope. Will holds his gaze for a moment longer. "Yes, um, both. But that's not the point, I-I-I know I may be making something out of nothing but, just for my peace of mind... please just, get me a referral for a brain scan so we know it's nothing physical. I think, I think that'll make it easier for me to accept. Some peace of mind to remind me, I'm just mentally ill."

Hannibal sighs and stands up from the table, taking their empty plates. "Alright, it is for the good of your health. Physical and mental. I'll refer you to a good friend of mine in the field."

"Can I help you wash dishes?" He asks, already getting up from the table to follow him to the kitchen.

"If you wish. I'll wash and you dry."

Will steps up to his side, grabbing the hand towel Hannibal hands him and waits for the first plate.

He watches his hands scrub and work, the flex of his forearms, watching each tendon tense and relax as the water glistens in the soft artifical light. In each movement of Hannibal's, no matter what it is, it strikes as graceful and balanced, each movement measured like the steps of a ballet. Not quite natural but not stilted like those of unpracticed in his dance no, it's second nature. Second. There is something under there rippling like dropping a stone into a lake... something just beneath the surface.

"Do you have a dishwasher? Or do I just put it in the dish drain?" Will asks as he dries the plate off.

"Just into the dish drain thank you. I enjoy hand washing my dishes, no need to use the dish washer when I can still use my hands." Hannibal answers, rinsing a plate.

"So it's control with you. Wash your dishes with your own hands rather than trust a machine whose job is to wash them for you." He looks over at him, watching for a reaction with that deliberately pushed button. Most people would rile at that, he wants to see Hannibal crack just a little with his rudeness as he does with everyone else.

"Cannot turn off your analytic mind either can you, Will?" Hannibal just looks amused, that soft crinkle of his eyes as he looks at him from his peripheral vision. He knows he's trying to push his buttons, and Hannibal just finds it amusing.

"Can't help it, it's in our nature." *Is this what domestic life with him would feel like? Something this soft with this current threatening to pull me under? Gentle verbal sparring and that sweet grin directed at me like a gun to a chest. Cradled and cared for like a lamb about to be slaughtered...* It leaves a complicated taste in Will's mouth. "So, care to tell me about this friend of yours?"

And just for a little while, Will can forget why he's here.

Mercury

Chapter Summary

Will gets a call from Jack, and a check up with Dr Sutcliffe. Mental illness or something physical, that is the question that weighs heavily on Will's mind today.

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone! I'm not dead! I was just caught up in other projects, was severely depressed, nearly died a few times, covid kicked my ass in lockdown (kinda still is). But! I now have a muse again and I feel a little better, at least enough to publish some writing. Please don't expect regular updates of anything, but it may be more frequent.

Happy reading!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

That soft tranquility is interrupted by the person that Will wants to hear from the least. Or at least that's what it feels like right now with his rattled nerves when it comes to the outside world. Since when was he so reliant on Hannibal's presence...? No time to dwell on that, there's a ringing phone. "Hello Jack." Will says, feeling like his quiet voice booms on the enclosed porch he stepped out to to take this call.

"Hey Will, just checking in." Jack is speaking like he is soothing a wounded animal, Will rolls his eyes at the chafing feeling it causes. That tone feels wrong coming from his mouth.

Will bites his tongue for a long moment, he knows he's being unfair, that it's just the stress getting to him and Jack's voice reminds him of that. He huffs a humorless laugh. "As well as I can be after killing another person and having to stay with my psychiatrist because he doesn't trust me to be safe on my own. I'd love to see Freddie's headline if she could see me now."

Jack sighs softly. "Well I hate to add onto your stress, but I do need to tell you there is an internal investigation into your last cases."

"Great, more fuel for the fire." Will says, rubbing at his face.

Jack continues as if he wasn't interrupted. "You've had two deadly encounters in your past two cases. You couldn't even pull the trigger when you were a cop. You're on temporary leave until this is cleared up. Is there something going on besides the dissociation that I need to know about? Just know I will be obligated to share it for the sake of the investigation."

Yes, I think I'm losing my mind. "No, no I'm working on things with Dr. Lecter. Dissociation and the bad dreams. I'm... I'm going to get a brain scan soon to cover all my bases." Will confesses, pacing around the porch and looking out to the backyard, completely unseeing.

"Good, good. I'm glad you're accepting his help Will. You have had us worried." Jack sounds so sincere. Then why hasn't he done anything?

"Don't hold your breath. I'm still acquiring the taste for therapy." Will says, stopping his pacing and sitting in a comfortable porch chair. "Talk to you next time Jack. Keep me updated." He hangs up before he can respond, sighing. With that, his head hangs back and he runs his hands over his face as if to scrub that interaction clean.

Great. No real peace for me after all this shit I went through. I know nothing is going to come of it but... things are shifting. Something is going to give out from under me. Each step I'm taking is creaking and buckling ready to give in at the last second. What's going to make me drop through the floor?

"Dr. Sutcliffe can fit you in tomorrow morning." A soft voice calls from the doorway beside him, startling him out of his daze. Will tries not to jump as he looks to his side to see Hannibal peeking out oh so politely.

Will snorts and pulls his hands away from his face. "What favor did you have to call in for that one?"

"One all the way from med school if you must know. Helping to write an essay." Hannibal walks out properly and sits in the chair beside him.

"You know, that doesn't inspire much confidence in your good friend." He follows his movements, rolling his head to look over at him with a hint of a grin.

"He is an amazing doctor Will, do you think I would be friends with anyone who isn't someone I find worthy and my equal?" Hannibal says, tilting his head at him as if it's the most obvious thing in the world.

"So modest and humble, all acquaintances and no friends huh Doctor Lecter?" Will teases and leans his head back.

"I have you." He states, which makes the other turn his head to look at him properly. Will can't help but smile at that, he doesn't believe but a small part of him wants to.

"You have me." He has to look away again, feeling as if he is looking at the sun, that pressure behind his eyes.

Will has always hated doctors and hospitals, even though he asked for this, this is no exception. Dr Sutcliffe was an okay enough man, even though he and Hannibal's verbal sparring match left him off kilter. Though it never seems like he is really on kilter anymore after what he's had to do out in the field. Dr Sutcliffe decided to humour him and give him the MRI he asked for.

Will closes his eyes as he slides slowly into the machine, it feels as if his body is going numb. The cold of the hospital penetrates the flimsy gown he was given. It makes his hair stand on end as if someone was moving too cold hands against his stomach under a blanket. It makes his heart stutter when he turns his head.

Will sees Thomas laying beside him in the darkness of his mind. His blood pours from each wound like fresh wine at communion, the uneven floor where blood pools become wine glasses to hold the sacred. It makes him reach before he swallows that spinning feeling down. He feels like a small dog while he sweats and shakes, waiting for the scan to be over. Or at least for the spectre haunting him to change. Thomas leaves him with a whisper just before he is pulled out of the machine, "Just like me."

Will can see that Hannibal stayed alongside Dr Sutcliffe. He'll get the results before him. Somehow that put his mind at ease before he was given them. "Everything looks normal." Dr Sutcliffe says, showing him each piece of the scan and paper in turn. "Physically, your brain is perfectly healthy. No vascular malformations, no tumors. No swelling or bleeding. No evidence of stroke."

Will looks between the two of them, a troubled expression on his face.

"Normally patients are thrilled to hear there is nothing wrong with them." He sets his clipboard aside to show he is paying more attention to Will.

"It's not anything physical... it's all just mental illness." Will shifts with unease, not able to really sit with that notion. There has to be something wrong physically, he cannot be going off the deep end. Not like this. He has already been outrunning ghosts. This cannot be the one to catch up with him.

"Brain scans cannot diagnose mental disorders, they can only rule out medical conditions that cause similar symptoms." Dr Sutcliffe can see this doesn't put him at ease. He sighs. "We can do some more tests, take some blood samples. They will most likely be just as inconclusive as this."

"I want to cover every angle of this, I need to know every piece of myself before I can accept there might be something wrong with my mind. Not my body." Will needs it to just be his brain, or else it's just him that is broken and wrong.

Even more wrong than before.

Chapter End Notes

Hey everyone, one more thing. Please leave comments and kudos, I have been having trouble with motivation since this fic lost steam. But also, I am not open to criticism or outright hate about character actions. That is generally uncool but it needs to be said. Please be nice.

Hope you enjoyed!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!